



BENEFITS OF FLIPPED CLASSROOM METHODOLOGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS AT UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract. The development of academic writing skills is a fundamental objective of higher education, particularly for university students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). However, traditional writing instruction often provides insufficient opportunities for individual practice, collaborative learning, and timely feedback. The flipped classroom methodology offers an alternative pedagogical approach by transferring the initial acquisition of theoretical knowledge to pre-class activities and dedicating classroom time to practical application, peer interaction, and teacher-guided writing. This article examines the potential benefits of flipped classroom methodology for improving university students' writing skills. The study adopts a narrative literature review approach, drawing on research concerning flipped learning in higher education, English language teaching, and academic writing. The analysis identifies several major pedagogical benefits, including improved writing organization, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary development, learner autonomy, critical thinking, and engagement in the writing process. Particular attention is given to the integration of pre-class preparation, collaborative classroom activities, formative assessment, and individualized feedback. The article also discusses challenges associated with digital access, student preparedness, workload, and instructional design. The findings suggest that flipped classroom methodology can provide a productive framework for university writing instruction when it is supported by clear learning objectives, accessible materials, structured classroom tasks, and continuous assessment. Nevertheless, its effectiveness depends on the quality of implementation rather than the mere use of technology.

Keywords: flipped classroom, academic writing, EFL students, higher education, writing skills, learner autonomy, formative assessment, collaborative learning.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most complex language skills that university students are expected to develop during their academic education. Effective writing requires more than grammatical knowledge or the ability to produce individual sentences. Students must formulate ideas,



organize arguments, select appropriate vocabulary, construct coherent paragraphs, use academic conventions, and revise their texts in response to feedback. These demands become particularly challenging for learners of English as a foreign language, who may experience difficulties with linguistic accuracy, academic vocabulary, text organization, and the development of independent arguments. In university settings, writing skills are essential for producing essays, research papers, reports, summaries, reflective assignments, and other academic texts. Students who lack sufficient writing competence may struggle to communicate their knowledge effectively, even when they understand the subject matter. Consequently, university writing instruction needs to provide regular practice, explicit instruction, meaningful interaction, and opportunities for revision. Traditional approaches to writing instruction frequently emphasize teacher explanations, grammar exercises, and the correction of completed assignments. Although these practices can contribute to language development, they may leave limited classroom time for guided writing, individual consultation, peer review, and the systematic improvement of drafts. Students may also receive feedback after completing an assignment, when they have fewer opportunities to apply the recommendations to the same text. Flipped classroom methodology offers a way to reorganize this process. In a flipped classroom, students study introductory materials before attending a lesson, while classroom time is devoted to applying knowledge through active learning activities. These activities may include collaborative problem-solving, guided practice, discussion, peer assessment, and teacher-supported tasks (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015). Rather than replacing the teacher, the approach changes the teacher's role from primarily delivering information to facilitating learning and providing targeted support. Research has increasingly investigated the use of flipped learning in higher education. Zain (2022), in a systematic literature review of 29 articles, examined its application in English as a second or foreign language instruction. Similarly, Baig and Yadegaridehkordi (2023) reviewed flipped classroom implementation in higher education, identifying the importance of technological resources, pedagogical activities, and appropriate strategies for addressing implementation challenges. A meta-analysis by Ni et al. (2023) also examined the impact of flipped classroom teaching on college English learning outcomes. Despite this growing body of research, the relationship between flipped classroom methodology and the specific dimensions of academic writing deserves careful pedagogical consideration. Writing instruction involves an iterative process in which students plan, draft, receive feedback, revise, and evaluate their work. The flipped model may support this process by creating more opportunities for active writing practice during face-to-face lessons. The purpose of this article is to examine the potential benefits of flipped classroom methodology for improving university students' writing skills. The study addresses three research questions:

1. What pedagogical benefits can flipped classroom methodology offer for university students' writing development?



2. How can pre-class preparation and in-class activities support the different stages of the writing process?
3. What challenges should university teachers consider when implementing the flipped classroom approach in writing courses?

METHODS

This article employs a narrative literature review design to examine the pedagogical value of flipped classroom methodology in university writing instruction. A narrative review is appropriate for synthesizing theoretical perspectives, reviewing relevant research findings, and identifying practical implications for teaching. Unlike an original experimental study, the present article does not involve the recruitment of participants, the administration of a writing intervention, or the collection of primary quantitative data. The analysis focuses on the relationship between flipped learning principles and the instructional requirements of academic writing. Particular attention is given to learner autonomy, active learning, collaborative writing, formative feedback, and the development of linguistic and organizational competence. The review draws on peer-reviewed publications concerning flipped classrooms in higher education, English language teaching, and student learning outcomes. Relevant sources include systematic literature reviews, meta-analyses, and empirical studies addressing technology-supported language learning and writing development. The literature was selected according to three broad criteria: relevance to flipped classroom pedagogy, applicability to university-level education, and contribution to understanding writing-related learning processes. Studies addressing broader educational outcomes were considered where their findings could inform the design of university writing instruction. The review particularly considers the systematic literature review conducted by Zain (2022), the higher education review by Baig and Yadegaridehkordi (2023), and the meta-analysis of college English learning by Ni et al. (2023). Additional research on flipped classroom effectiveness was used to contextualize the pedagogical discussion. The selected literature was examined thematically. Findings and theoretical arguments were organized into five categories: writing organization and accuracy, learner autonomy, collaborative learning and feedback, critical thinking and engagement, and implementation challenges. The identified themes were then interpreted in relation to the stages of the writing process. This approach makes it possible to discuss how pre-class learning and classroom practice may complement each other in university writing courses. As the article presents a narrative synthesis rather than a systematic review with a predefined database search and formal screening protocol, its conclusions should be interpreted as an evidence-informed pedagogical analysis rather than an exhaustive assessment of all available research.

RESULTS

The thematic analysis identifies five major areas in which flipped classroom methodology may contribute to university students' writing development. These areas are interconnected



and depend on the integration of preparation, practice, feedback, and revision. One potential benefit of the flipped classroom is the opportunity to devote more classroom time to the organization and development of written texts. Students can study the theoretical foundations of paragraph structure, essay organization, thesis statements, topic sentences, supporting evidence, and concluding paragraphs before the lesson. Pre-class materials may include short video explanations, annotated model essays, reading passages, and guided questions. Students can review these resources at their own pace and return to difficult sections when necessary. During classroom sessions, they can apply the concepts by analyzing sample texts, identifying structural weaknesses, and planning their own compositions. For example, in a lesson devoted to argumentative essays, students may examine a recorded explanation of thesis statements and supporting arguments before class. The teacher can then use classroom time for students to evaluate sample introductions, develop outlines, and discuss the relevance of supporting evidence. This arrangement creates more opportunities for practical application than a lesson devoted primarily to explaining essay structure. It also allows teachers to identify organizational problems while students are developing their texts, rather than only after submission. The approach is particularly useful because writing competence develops through repeated practice. Students need opportunities to compare examples, experiment with different organizational patterns, and revise their work. The flipped model can facilitate these activities by moving initial explanations outside the classroom and reserving face-to-face interaction for guided application. Grammatical accuracy and vocabulary selection are essential components of effective academic writing. University students must use appropriate sentence structures, verb forms, linking expressions, academic collocations, and discipline-specific terminology. However, these elements cannot be mastered through theoretical explanations alone. Flipped classroom methodology can support linguistic development by combining self-paced instruction with classroom application. Before a lesson, students may study materials on complex sentences, articles, punctuation, cohesive devices, or academic word choice. Short quizzes and diagnostic exercises can help them identify areas that require further attention. During the lesson, students can apply the target language in meaningful writing tasks. They may correct sentences, compare alternative expressions, edit paragraphs, or revise their own drafts. The teacher can provide immediate explanations when recurring errors become apparent. For instance, students preparing a cause-and-effect essay may review the use of connectors such as “consequently,” “therefore,” “as a result,” and “due to.” In class, they can use these expressions to establish logical relationships between claims and supporting evidence. This method also creates opportunities to distinguish between grammatical correctness and effective academic style. Students can discuss why a particular expression is appropriate in a formal essay and why another may be vague, repetitive, or overly informal. The benefits are most likely to emerge when linguistic preparation is closely connected to the writing task. Watching a grammar video without subsequently using the



target structure in a composition is unlikely to produce the same learning opportunities as combining explanation, practice, feedback, and revision. Learner autonomy is another important potential benefit of flipped classroom methodology. In this model, students take greater responsibility for preparing before class, identifying areas of difficulty, and managing their learning activities. Writing development requires sustained effort beyond classroom sessions. Students need to read, plan, draft, edit, and revise their texts independently. A flipped course can help them develop these habits by establishing a regular cycle of preparation and application. For example, students may be asked to watch a short lesson on paragraph unity, complete a planning worksheet, and submit a preliminary thesis statement before attending class. During the lesson, they use their preparation to develop a paragraph and receive feedback from the teacher and peers. This process encourages students to arrive with an initial understanding of the topic and specific questions about their writing. Instead of depending entirely on the teacher to explain every concept, they become more actively involved in identifying and addressing their own learning needs. The approach may also promote meta-cognitive awareness. Students can evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, set writing goals, and monitor changes across successive drafts. Reflective activities, such as writing journals and self-assessment checklists, can help learners recognize recurring problems and develop strategies for overcoming them. Nevertheless, autonomy should not be confused with the absence of teacher support. Students who have limited experience with independent learning may need explicit instructions, manageable deadlines, preparation checks, and regular encouragement. A structured approach is therefore essential to ensure that independent study becomes productive rather than an additional source of difficulty. Writing is a recursive process that benefits from feedback at different stages. Students frequently need assistance with the clarity of their arguments, the relevance of supporting evidence, paragraph coherence, grammar, and academic conventions. When classroom time is dominated by explanations, teachers may have fewer opportunities to provide individualized guidance. Flipped classroom methodology can create additional opportunities for feedback by moving introductory content to pre-class study. Classroom sessions can then focus on writing workshops, peer review, teacher conferences, and collaborative editing. Peer review is particularly valuable when students are given clear evaluation criteria. For example, learners can exchange drafts and assess whether each text contains a clear thesis statement, logically organized paragraphs, relevant evidence, appropriate transitions, and a coherent conclusion.

A structured peer-review checklist may include the following questions:

- Is the main argument clearly expressed?
- Does each paragraph develop one central idea?
- Is the supporting evidence relevant and sufficient?
- Are ideas connected through appropriate transitions?



- Which sentences require clarification or grammatical correction?

These questions encourage students to read critically and provide specific feedback rather than simply identifying a text as good or bad. Reviewing classmates' work may also help students recognize weaknesses in their own writing. Teacher feedback remains essential, especially when students have difficulty distinguishing major rhetorical problems from minor language errors. The instructor can prioritize issues that most strongly affect meaning, organization, and clarity before addressing detailed grammatical corrections. The combination of peer assessment and teacher guidance can make writing lessons more interactive and responsive to students' individual needs. However, peer review should be taught and monitored carefully to prevent inaccurate corrections, superficial comments, or unhelpful criticism. Academic writing requires students to evaluate information, compare perspectives, construct arguments, and support claims with relevant evidence. These intellectual activities are central to university education and cannot be reduced to the production of grammatically correct sentences. The flipped classroom provides opportunities for students to engage with texts and questions before class and use classroom discussions to examine ideas more deeply. Pre-class reading and video materials may introduce a topic, present contrasting viewpoints, or explain how evidence supports an argument. Students can then participate in debates, group discussions, and collaborative planning activities before drafting their texts. For example, a writing lesson on the role of technology in education may begin with short readings presenting different perspectives. Before class, students identify the main claims and prepare questions. During the lesson, they compare arguments, evaluate evidence, and develop an outline for an argumentative essay. Such activities may help students formulate more thoughtful arguments and avoid unsupported generalizations. Collaborative discussion can also expose learners to alternative interpretations and encourage them to reconsider their initial positions. The flipped approach may support engagement by giving students a more active role in the lesson. Instead of listening to explanations throughout the session, they participate in tasks that require decisions, discussion, and practical application. Research on flipped learning in higher education has examined its relationship with student engagement and academic outcomes, although the extent of its benefits varies according to course design and implementation (Baig & Yadegaridehkordi, 2023; Strelan et al., 2020). Confidence may also improve when students receive manageable tasks, constructive feedback, and repeated opportunities to revise their writing. However, increased confidence or motivation should not be assumed automatically; these outcomes require appropriate support and should be evaluated separately from writing achievement.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the thematic analysis suggest that flipped classroom methodology has considerable pedagogical potential for university writing instruction. Its principal contribution is not simply the use of digital technology but the reorganization of instructional



time around active learning, practice, feedback, and revision. The benefits identified in this review are consistent with the broader argument that flipped learning can create opportunities for more active classroom participation. Strelan et al. (2020), in a meta-analysis of 198 studies involving 33,678 students, reported an overall moderate positive effect of flipped classrooms on student performance compared with traditional instruction. Their analysis also highlighted the importance of structured active learning opportunities. Similarly, Ni et al. (2023) examined 24 empirical studies involving 2,526 participants in higher education and reported positive overall effects of flipped classroom teaching on college English learning outcomes. Their findings emphasize the importance of course design, learning management systems, review opportunities, and cooperative learning. These results provide a rationale for considering flipped learning in university English courses. Nevertheless, general improvements in academic performance or English learning should not be interpreted as direct proof that every component of writing improves under flipped instruction. Writing-specific outcomes require appropriate assessment, including analysis of students' drafts, revisions, and final texts. A particularly important implication concerns the relationship between theoretical preparation and practical application. Writing is a skill that develops through active production and revision. Pre-class videos and readings can introduce relevant concepts, but students must use these concepts in meaningful writing tasks to develop competence. Therefore, the success of the flipped classroom depends on the quality of the learning activities that follow pre-class preparation. A practical flipped writing lesson can be organized into three connected stages.

Stage 1: Pre-class preparation. The teacher provides a short instructional video, a model text, a vocabulary list, and a brief comprehension task. Students study the materials and identify questions or difficulties. The resources should be concise, accessible, and directly connected to the intended writing outcome.

Stage 2: In-class application. Students analyze model texts, discuss organizational choices, plan their own compositions, and produce an initial draft. Peer-review activities and teacher conferences provide opportunities to identify problems before the final submission. The teacher uses preparation quizzes and classroom observations to determine which concepts require additional explanation.

Stage 3: Post-class revision and reflection. Students revise their drafts using feedback and submit a final version. They may also complete a short reflection describing the changes they made, the feedback they found useful, and the areas they intend to improve in future assignments. This sequence integrates independent learning with collaborative and teacher-guided practice. It also enables assessment to become part of the learning process rather than an activity conducted only at the end of a unit. Teachers can adapt the model to different genres, including descriptive paragraphs, narrative texts, argumentative essays, academic summaries, reports, and research-based assignments. The instructional materials and



assessment criteria should reflect the specific requirements of each genre. Despite its potential advantages, flipped classroom methodology presents several challenges. First, students may not complete pre-class activities consistently. If learners arrive without the necessary preparation, classroom tasks can become difficult to manage. Low-stakes quizzes, clear instructions, realistic workloads, and brief preparation checks may help address this problem. Second, access to technology and reliable internet connectivity may vary among students. Universities should therefore provide downloadable resources, transcripts, printable alternatives, and access to institutional learning platforms where possible. Flipped learning should not disadvantage students who have limited access to digital devices. Third, designing high-quality instructional materials requires time and pedagogical expertise. Teachers must select appropriate examples, create meaningful practice activities, and ensure that pre-class content corresponds to classroom objectives. Simply transferring lengthy lectures to online videos does not necessarily create an effective flipped classroom. Fourth, collaborative writing and peer review require clear procedures. Students need guidance on how to provide constructive feedback, evaluate evidence, and distinguish between substantive problems and minor language errors. Teachers should monitor peer-review activities and intervene when necessary. Finally, the evidence supporting flipped classrooms is not uniformly positive across every outcome or context. Van Alten et al. (2019) reported a small positive effect on learning outcomes in their meta-analysis but found no overall effect on student satisfaction. Such findings indicate that implementation details matter and that students' perceptions, academic achievement, and specific writing competencies should not be treated as interchangeable measures. The present article also has limitations. It uses a narrative literature review rather than a systematic review with exhaustive database searches and formal study-quality assessment. Furthermore, it does not present original experimental data demonstrating causal improvements in writing performance. Future empirical research should examine the effects of flipped writing instruction through pre-tests and post-tests, comparison groups where feasible, analytic writing rubrics, revision records, and student interviews.

CONCLUSION

Flipped classroom methodology offers a promising approach to improving university students' writing instruction by combining independent preparation with active classroom practice. The literature examined in this article suggests that the model can create valuable opportunities to develop text organization, grammatical accuracy, academic vocabulary, learner autonomy, critical thinking, and collaborative writing skills. Its main pedagogical advantage lies in the redistribution of classroom time. When students study introductory concepts before lessons, teachers can devote more attention to guided writing, peer review, individualized feedback, and revision. These activities are particularly relevant to academic writing because effective written communication develops through repeated practice rather than theoretical knowledge alone. However, flipped classroom methodology should not be



considered an automatic solution to writing difficulties. Its effectiveness depends on accessible materials, appropriate instructional design, meaningful classroom activities, student preparation, and continuous teacher support. Digital tools should serve clear pedagogical objectives rather than become ends in themselves. Universities seeking to implement this methodology should introduce it gradually, provide explicit guidance on independent learning, and evaluate students' writing through transparent criteria. Further empirical research is needed to determine which combinations of pre-class instruction, collaborative activities, and feedback produce the strongest improvements in specific dimensions of academic writing. In conclusion, flipped classroom methodology can provide a flexible and student-centered framework for university writing courses. When carefully designed and supported by systematic assessment, it can strengthen the connection between language knowledge and practical writing performance and contribute to more independent, reflective, and effective academic writers.

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