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INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY



Print ISSN: 2676-5587
Online ISSN: 2676-5985

Exploring the Impact of Computer-Supported Input Enhancement on Enhancing Parallel Structures in EFL Learners' Writing: A Comparative Study in Flipped Online and Face-to-Face Higher Education Settings

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Article info

Abstract

Article type:

Abstract

Research article

Received:

7/11/2023

Accepted:

30/1/2024

This study investigated the impact of computer-supported input enhancement techniques on the mastery of parallel structures in essay writing among EFL learners within the contexts of flipped online and face-to-face instruction. A comparative analysis of the effectiveness of these techniques was conducted between the two instructional settings. To ensure sample homogeneity, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was employed. The research involved 75 participants, randomly divided into three groups: flipped online (n=25), flipped face-to-face (n=23), and a control group (n=27). Prior to the intervention, a pretest was administered to assess participants' baseline proficiency in utilizing parallel structures. In the flipped online class, students accessed pre-recorded videos one week before class and received online feedback on their essays. In the flipped face-to-face class, students received printed notes highlighting relevant structures for each session at the end of each class. Input enhancement was implemented in the groups by highlighting, capitalizing, bolded text, enlarged font size, and italicized text. The control group followed their regular instructional method without any specific intervention. At the semester's conclusion, all participants completed a post-test essay assessment to evaluate their proficiency in utilizing parallel structures. The evaluation of the participants' essays was conducted using an analytic and holistic scoring rubric, adapted from the instructional textbook. A series of statistical analyses were conducted, including an ANOVA test, the homogeneity of regression slopes, Levene's test, Pearson correlations, and a one-way ANCOVA. The findings revealed that the flipped online

group demonstrated the highest proficiency in employing parallel structures, emphasizing the efficacy of computer-supported input enhancement techniques in the online, flipped approach. Additionally, the flipped face-to-face group exhibited improvement compared to the control group, highlighting the potential benefits of input enhancement in the face-to-face flipped approach. These results offer empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of input enhancement techniques and underscore the significance of explicit instruction and practice in language learning. The integration of these techniques by language instructors and curriculum developers holds promise for enhancing the acquisition and application of parallel structures in language learning settings.

Keywords: *Computer-supported input enhancement, Flipped learning, Flipped online, Face-to-face instructional contexts, Parallel structures.*

Cite this article: Farzaneh, M., Khodabandeh, F., & Rezvani, E. (2024). Exploring the impact of computer-supported input enhancement on enhancing parallel structures in EFL learners' writing: a comparative study in flipped online and face-to-face higher education settings. *Journal of Modern Research in English Language Studies*, 11(3), 125-153.



DOI: 10.30479/jmrels.2024.19542.2281

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Publisher: Imam Khomeini International University

1. Introduction

In recent years, flipped instruction has emerged as a prominent and effective teaching approach in language education. This pedagogical method involves delivering pre-recorded lectures or learning materials to students before they attend class, enabling more interactive and collaborative learning activities during in-person sessions (Lin et al., 2019). Advancements in technology have further enhanced the accessibility of flipped instruction, empowering learners to access course content and engage in language practice at their convenience, transcending time and place. Besides its convenience and flexibility, flipped instruction has shown significant positive effects on language learning outcomes. Research indicates that this approach can boost learners' motivation, engagement, and autonomy, while also improving their language production and comprehension skills (Abdullah et al., 2019; Challob, 2021).

A specific pedagogical technique that synergizes well with flipped instruction is input enhancement. Although input enhancement and flipped instruction are distinct teaching strategies, their convergence holds the potential to create a transformative learning environment for students. Input

enhancement involves directing learners' attention to specific aspects of the target language, such as grammar or vocabulary, through the use of highlighting or supplementary input (Sharwood Smith, 1993). This technique can take various forms, including the visual highlighting of targeted structures, the incorporation of visual aids like pictures or diagrams, or the provision of explicit explanations through teacher-led instruction (Al-Shammari & Sahiouni, 2023). Research consistently demonstrates the effectiveness of both input enhancement and flipped classrooms in promoting language learning and enhancing student outcomes, such as increased participation and improved academic performance (Strayer, 2012).

Within the realm of essay writing, input enhancement emerges as a valuable tool for supporting students' language development within a flipped classroom. By emphasizing critical grammatical structures, academic vocabulary, and rhetorical devices, educators can provide students with a scaffold for proficient essay composition. One specific aspect of essay writing amenable to enhancement through input enhancement is the use of parallel structures. In the context of writing, parallel structures refer to a grammatical and stylistic technique wherein elements in a sentence or passage share a consistent grammatical structure. For instance, the following sentence illustrates this technique: 'The athlete excelled not only in speed but also in agility.' This alignment of words, phrases, or clauses creates symmetry and balance within the sentence (Rahimi, 2009). The significance of parallel structures extends beyond mere grammar; it is intrinsically linked to writing style. Rahimi (2009) underscores the importance of effective writing style, asserting that it is the key to successful nonfiction writing. By incorporating parallel structures and other stylistic devices, writers can elevate their prose and engage readers on a deeper level. This assertion is grounded in the principles of discourse analysis, which emphasizes the role of structural coherence in effective communication (Bahaziq, 2016). Parallel structures, when thoughtfully employed, contribute to the overall flow and clarity of a written piece, facilitating a seamless progression of ideas. As highlighted by Rahimi (2009), the intentional use of parallelism not only enhances structural coherence but also creates a sense of rhythm and balance within sentences. Moreover, consistent maintenance of parallel structure serves a dual purpose in writing. Firstly, it helps writers avoid grammatical errors by promoting a parallel arrangement of grammatical elements, reducing the likelihood of syntactic ambiguity (Worden, 2015). Secondly, from a stylistic perspective, scholars such as RahmtAllah (2020) argue that the deliberate implementation of parallelism contributes significantly to enhancing overall writing style. Through careful attention to parallel structures, writers can infuse their prose with a sense of sophistication and coherence, captivating readers and reinforcing the communicative impact of their writing. However, there exists

a dearth of knowledge regarding the impact of input enhancement techniques on learners' use of parallel structures in essay writing classes.

While previous research has separately examined flipped instruction and input enhancement, there is a noticeable lack of studies that amalgamate these two approaches to enhance specific writing skills. To address this research gap and contribute to the advancement of effective teaching methods, this study seeks to investigate the impact of computer-supported input enhancement on the utilization of parallel structures in essay writing classes. Importantly, this investigation will consider both flipped online and face-to-face instructional formats, acknowledging the significance of parallel structures in crafting coherent essays, the importance of input enhancement techniques, and the benefits of flipped instruction. This research seeks to address the central question:

Does the implementation of computer-supported input enhancement have a significant differential impact on EFL learners' use of parallel structures in essay writing within flipped online and face-to-face classrooms?

By addressing this research question, this study intends to enhance our current understanding and knowledge base regarding the intersection of flipped instruction, input enhancement, and the use of parallel structures in essay writing. The findings will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of incorporating computer-supported input enhancement techniques within a flipped classroom setting to improve students' writing skills. Furthermore, by examining both online and face-to-face essay writing classes, this research offers a comprehensive exploration of the applicability and effectiveness of input enhancement techniques across diverse instructional contexts.

2. Literature Review

This section aims to present a thorough summary of the theoretical foundations and existing empirical studies relevant to the topic of investigation in this study.

2.1. Theoretical Foundations of Flipped Instruction

The theoretical justifications for implementing flipped instruction are rooted in student-centered learning, influenced by constructivist theorists like Piaget (1967) and Vygotsky (1978). Constructivists argue that learning happens by building meaningful interactions and personal understanding (DeVries, 2000). Cooperative learning, which fosters collaborative activities among students, has been recognized as one of the most effective teaching methods in flipped classrooms (Foldnes, 2016; Lai & Hwang, 2016). Another theoretical basis for flipped instruction is mastery learning, emphasizing feedback, regular retrieval practice, and a motivating learning environment.

Additionally, active learning principles align with the active participation of students in classroom activities (Çakiroğlu & Öztürk, 2023).

2.2. Theoretical Foundations of Input Enhancement in Language Acquisition

Input enhancement, rooted in theoretical frameworks such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1990), Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1983), Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (1988), and Selinker's Interlanguage Theory (1972), offers theoretical justifications for its implementation in language instruction. Krashen's model posits that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to input slightly beyond their current proficiency level, and enhancement aids in making specific linguistic forms more noticeable. Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of conscious awareness of linguistic features, aligning with enhancement's role in directing learners' attention. Long's Interaction Hypothesis underscores the value of communication in language learning, and enhancement can create opportunities for interaction by highlighting linguistic elements. Cognitive Load Theory, as proposed by Sweller, supports enhancement as a means to reduce extraneous cognitive load and facilitate more efficient processing. Selinker's Interlanguage Theory suggests that enhancement aids learners in refining their interlanguage by providing explicit cues about target language forms, preventing fossilization of errors. Together, these theoretical perspectives form a coherent rationale for the use of input enhancement, emphasizing its role in promoting noticing, cognitive processing, and interaction, ultimately contributing to language acquisition.

2.3. Flipped Instruction

In recent years, technological advancements have significantly impacted academic disciplines. Flipped instruction, introduced by Bergmann and Sams in 2012, is a student-centered pedagogical model that replaces traditional in-class lectures with opportunities for students to learn and review concepts outside of class (Fischer & Yang, 2022). Aghaei et al. (2020) explain that the goal of flipped instruction is to shift from passive listening to active and collaborative learning facilitated by computer and internet technology. Typically, students view instructional video lectures outside the classroom and participate in classroom-based activities, such as paired discussions, to deepen their understanding of the content (Ebadi et al., 2022).

Several research studies have presented compelling evidence supporting the benefits associated with the flipped classroom model. These advantages include accelerated learning progress (Jiang et al., 2022), increased student engagement and activity (Baepler et al., 2014; Basal, 2015; Cherney, 2008; Davies et al., 2013; O'Flaherty & Phillips, 2015; Steen-Utheim &

Foldnes, 2018), greater student accountability for preparation and attendance (Polat et al., 2022), improved academic performance and reduced cognitive burden (Karaca & Ocak, 2017), heightened student participation (Chen Hsieh et al., 2017), positive perceptions of pre- and in-class activities by students (Han et al., 2023), redefined teacher roles (Zou, 2020), favorable student attitudes in writing classes (Ahmed, 2016; Challob, 2021; Dobakhti et al., 2023; Qader & Yalcin Arslan, 2019; Shooli et al., 2021; Yousofi & Bashiri, 2023; Wu et al., 2020), enhanced grammar skills (Basal, 2015; Dincer, & Polat, 2022; Nabilou & Zarei, 2023), improved reading comprehension (Gok et al., 2023), active learning (Namaziandost & Çakmak, 2020), fostering student responsibility for learning (Chang & Lan, 2021), addressing diverse learning styles (Tomas et al., 2019), and promoting reflective learning (Chen et al., 2019).

However, the existing literature on flipped instruction in language learning has certain gaps. Previous studies have primarily focused on vocabulary, writing ability, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension, overlooking the potential benefits of flipped online instruction, which has become increasingly relevant, particularly during situations such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Addressing this gap requires researchers to conduct a sufficient number of studies in this area. Additionally, the effects of flipped instruction on EFL learners' essay writing, specifically in terms of utilizing parallel structures, have not been thoroughly examined. It is also necessary to conduct a comparative study comparing the implementation of input enhancement in flipped online and face-to-face classes. Hence, the primary objective of this study is to bridge these knowledge gaps by investigating the impact of computer-supported input enhancement techniques on the utilization of parallel structures in both flipped online and face-to-face essay writing courses.

2.4. Input Enhancement

In addition to flipped instruction, input enhancement techniques have gained attention as effective strategies to enhance second language acquisition. Input enhancement refers to a pedagogical approach that directs learners' attention towards specific features of the target language, such as grammar or vocabulary, through various means of highlighting or providing additional input (Sharwood Smith, 1993). These techniques can include visually emphasizing targeted structures, using visual aids like pictures or diagrams, or providing explicit explanations through teacher-led instruction (Park & Oh, 2018).

Previous research has shown that input enhancement can positively impact language learning outcomes. For instance, Norris and Ortega (2000) stated that input enhancement had a positive impact on students' overall writing

proficiency. Fakhrzadeh and Yazdanjoo (2020) demonstrated the effectiveness of input enhancement techniques in improving EFL learners' writing performance. Furthermore, studies have shown that input enhancement can improve language production and comprehension skills (Rott, 2007), the acquisition of grammatical rules (Bakhshandeh & Jafari, 2018; Simard, 2009), request strategies (Fakher Ajabshir, 2022) and the development of specific linguistic structures, such as the Spanish past tense (Loewen & Inceoglu, 2016). Additionally, scholars like Lyster (2004) and Nassaji and Fotos (2011) have emphasized the role of input enhancement and practice in language acquisition, highlighting the benefits of targeted exposure to linguistic structures through corrective feedback or explicit instruction.

In summary, the literature reviewed in this part highlights the benefits of flipped instruction and input enhancement techniques in language learning. Flipped instruction promotes active learning, increased engagement, and improved academic performance. Input enhancement techniques, on the other hand, have been shown to enhance learners' language proficiency, particularly in writing skills. However, the effectiveness of combining input enhancement techniques with flipped instruction, specifically in improving the use of parallel structures in essay writing, remains understudied. The study seeks to address this research gap by investigating the impact of input enhancement techniques in flipped online and face-to-face essay writing classes for EFL learners.

2.5. Addressing the Research Gap and Significance

Building upon the identified research gap in the literature, our study endeavors to address a crucial need in the field of language education. While the efficacy of flipped instruction and input enhancement techniques in language learning is well-documented, a significant void exists in comprehensively understanding how these approaches synergistically influence the use of parallel structures in essay writing among EFL learners. The mastery of parallel structures is paramount for students seeking excellence in various language-related domains, particularly in academic and professional contexts (Worden, 2015). The absence of such an exploration poses a considerable challenge for educators, curriculum developers, and learners alike. Our research is positioned to fill this critical void by meticulously examining the intersection of flipped instruction and input enhancement, aiming to provide insights that can inform and enhance pedagogical strategies. The findings are expected to benefit a broad audience, including educators, curriculum developers, researchers, and learners, contributing to the advancement of effective language education practices.

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative quasi-experimental design as true randomization was not feasible. The participants of the study were assigned to one of three groups: a group engaged in flipped online instruction, a group engaged in flipped face-to-face instruction, and a control group. The dependent variable in this study was the essay writing proficiency of the participants in terms of parallel structure, while the independent variables consisted of the two formats of classroom instruction (flipped online and flipped face-to-face) and the utilization of input enhancement techniques. Throughout the duration of the study, the participants received comprehensive instruction, with a total of sixteen sessions dedicated to enhancing their skills.

3.2. Participants

3.2.1. Sampling procedure

The participants were selected through a stratified random sampling procedure. Stratification was based on the branches of Isfahan Payame Noor University (Khorasgan, Mobarakeh, and Najafabad). From each branch, participants were randomly selected to ensure representation from various locations.

3.2.2. Sample Size

The study involved 75 intermediate-level EFL learners, comprising both male and female participants, aged between 19 and 24 years old with a mean age of 19.2. These learners were enrolled in English translation programs at Isfahan Payame Noor universities in Iran, specifically from the Khorasgan, Mobarakeh, and Najafabad branches of the university. They were undertaking a mandatory Writing course during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was employed to assess the English language proficiency of the participants and to establish sample homogeneity. This test consists of a total of 60 multiple-choice items, divided into two sections. The first section encompasses 40 items designed to evaluate various aspects of language proficiency, while the second section comprises 20 items aimed at further assessing language skills. To ensure comparability and homogeneity among the three groups (Group A, Group B, and Group C), the OPT was administered, and participants' scores were recorded. The mean OPT score across all participants was 27.14, with a corresponding standard

deviation of 1.80, reflecting the central tendency and variability in their English language proficiency.

3.3.2. Pretest and Posttests

For the pretest and posttest assessments, the participants were instructed to write essays following the guidelines of a standard 5-paragraph essay structure. The pretest topic assigned was "Computer games for children as a serious problem in many countries," while the posttest topic was "What are the side effects of watching TV?" Participants were provided 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete their essays.

The evaluation of participants' essays utilized an analytic and holistic scoring rubric, adapted from 'The Practical Writer with Readings' by Bailey and Powell (2009) (seventh edition). This comprehensive rubric was intentionally crafted to assess multiple dimensions of essay writing, encompassing content, organization, coherence, grammar, vocabulary, and the explicit use of parallel structures, which served as integral elements influencing the overall scoring. The rubric, thoughtfully designed for our study, employs a nuanced approach to evaluate multiple dimensions of essay writing. Each aspect, including content, organization, coherence, grammar, and vocabulary, is systematically quantified to provide a detailed analysis of participants' performance. Specific criteria within each dimension are assigned numerical values, enabling a precise and structured evaluation process. Moreover, the rubric incorporates a dedicated focus on the explicit use of parallel structures. This deliberate inclusion recognizes the significance of parallelism as a critical element in effective writing. The assessment of parallel structures goes beyond mere identification; it considers how participants integrate parallelism into their essays, assessing its impact on overall coherence, structural organization, and language fluency.

To ensure consistent and reliable scoring, two English instructors were involved in evaluating the essays. The inter-rater reliability was calculated to measure the agreement between the two raters regarding the essay writing component. The findings indicated substantial agreement between the two raters for both the pretest ($r(73) = .793$, indicating a substantial effect size, $p < .05$) and posttest ($r(73) = .915$, indicating a substantial effect size, $p < .05$) evaluations.

3.3.3. Teaching Materials

The research employed the textbook "The Practical Writer with Readings" written by Bailey and Powell (2009) (seventh edition) as the instructional material. Throughout the term, this textbook served as a comprehensive resource for students, offering them a detailed, step-by-step guide to learn the art of essay writing.

3.3.4. Learning Management System (LMS)

A Learning Management System (LMS) refers to an internet-based platform designed to facilitate the creation, delivery, and evaluation of educational courses. It supports various instructional formats, including face-to-face, blended/hybrid, and distance learning. Bervell and Arkorful, (2020) highlighted that an LMS allows students to access course materials such as lessons, notes, lectures, and other resources outside the traditional classroom setting. Şahin and Yurdugül (2022) emphasized the importance of availability, as students can utilize the LMS anytime and from anywhere.

In the context of this study, the LMS served as a centralized hub for the dissemination of instructional materials related to flipped instruction. It facilitated the delivery of online content, interactive activities, and assessments. Additionally, the LMS played a crucial role in tracking and evaluating participant engagement and progress throughout the course, providing valuable data for the research analysis.

3.4. Treatment

The treatment in this study involved three distinct instructional approaches: the Flipped Online Class, the Flipped Face-to-Face Class, and a Control Group. Each group employed specific methods to investigate the impact of input enhancement on the development of parallel structures in the writing skills of EFL learners.

3.4.1. Flipped Online Class

In the flipped online class, the instructional procedure was central to the treatment and comprised two parts:

Recorded Video Instruction: In each session, students watched recorded videos prepared by the instructor. These videos aimed to guide students in expanding their ideas into well-structured paragraphs, with a specific focus on the effective use of parallel structures. Importantly, these instructional videos were made available to students one week prior to the class session, enabling them to prepare in advance.

Essay Writing: Following the video instruction, students were tasked with applying their newly acquired knowledge by writing essays that incorporated the concepts covered in the videos. This practical application was essential for reinforcing their understanding of parallel structures and their ability to use them effectively.

Throughout the online class sessions, the instructor actively engaged with students by providing feedback and comments on their essays. This personalized feedback helped students identify their strengths and areas for improvement in using parallel structures and addressed any uncertainties they

may have had. The teacher's observation of students' written samples and the provision of personalized feedback in the online classes were facilitated through the features of the LMS. The LMS allowed the instructor to access and review students' essays in real-time as they worked on them. This dynamic interaction was made possible through the asynchronous nature of the online platform, enabling the teacher to provide timely feedback, suggestions, and comments. The personalized feedback addressed individual students' writing strengths, areas for improvement, and uncertainties related to the use of parallel structures.

Input enhancement in this group involved leveraging the functionalities of the LMS to augment course materials. Various techniques, including highlighting, capitalization, italicization, and font size variations, were applied to the instructional content within the LMS. These enhancements aimed to draw attention to key linguistic features, guide students in recognizing parallel structures, and reinforce their understanding of effective language use within the context of essay writing.

In summary, the treatment in the flipped online class aimed to investigate the impact of computer-supported input enhancement on the development of parallel structures in the writing skills of EFL learners. By comparing the results of the pretest and posttest, the study sought to assess the effectiveness of this instructional method in enhancing students' writing abilities within the flipped online class setting.

Figure 1

Treatment of Input Enhancement in Flipped Online Class - Experimental Group

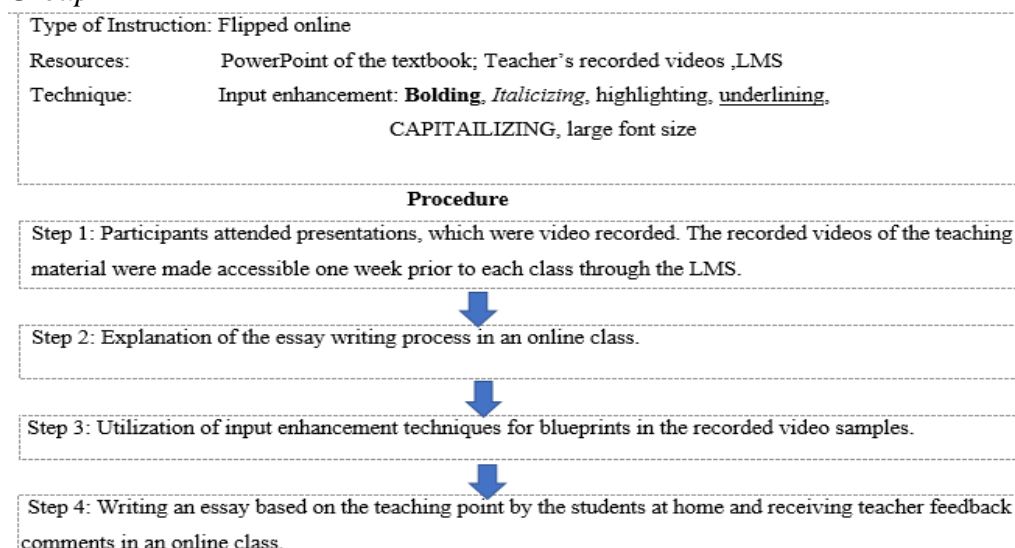


Figure 2

A Shot of Teaching Paralle Structures to the Flipped Online Class

Meeting Layouts Pods Audio

Blueprint.pdf Draw Stop Sharing

Blueprint

A **blueprinted** thesis lists in *a series* the *main points* or topics your essay will develop. The main points should *be listed in the order* that they will appear in the body paragraphs. Because a five-paragraph essay has **three central paragraphs**, your blueprint should have **three points**, one for the topic of each central paragraph. The points in the series must be **parallel** and should be written in the **same grammatical form**. For example:

Computer games have negative effects for children because they **lead to obesity**, **sleep deprivation**, and **poor grades in schools**.

The **order** of the ideas presented in the body paragraphs must *match the order* indicated in the **thesis statement**. A reader who reads the above thesis statement will expect the rest of the essay to include *one paragraph* on "obesity," *the second paragraph* on "sleep deprivation," and *the third paragraph* on "poor grades in schools." If your essay provides the paragraphs according to the blueprints, then your reader will be able to follow you easily.

1. What are the three major supporting points (blue prints) in the essay? Write them below.
*Computer games have negative effects for children because they lead to **obesity**, **sleep deprivation**, and **poor grades** in schools.*

Figure 3

A Sample from one of Participants in the Flipped Online Class

Meeting Layouts Pods Audio

essay in online class.pdf Draw Stop Sharing

The effect of running for body

People who lie down and people who walk or run every day are completely different. Running **energizes the body, energizes the body and good meditation for mind.**

And meditates mind

It's very important for your body, so used to **(gets into)** the habit of running every day. Running offers physical and mental benefits. Running helps take **(keeps)** your knees healthy. Running makes your knee bones stronger and stronger. As we age, our knees do better than those who avoid running. Doctors recommend that children **run and play** because **bones get stronger** as they grow. This helps prevent fractures. Running also helps build strong muscles. People worry about how to lose weight and start dieting without consulting a nutritionist. Running is very important for losing weight and maintaining weight. Running burns calories and helps you lose weight.

Running is essential for improving cardiovascular health, which improves blood circulation and heart rate. Increased blood circulation keeps the heart functioning normally and prevents heart attacks. Therefore running is the best exercise for all part of our body and prevents from many diseases.

3.4.2. *Flipped Face-to-Face Class*

The Flipped Face-to-Face Class served as an experimental group within the study, focusing on input enhancement techniques. In this instructional approach, students received printed notes from the teacher at the end of each class session. These notes contained the teaching material to be covered in the subsequent session. The unique feature of these printed notes was their deliberate use of various formatting techniques to emphasize key linguistic features and structures relevant to essay writing. Specifically, the notes incorporated:

Highlighted Text: Important concepts and elements were highlighted to draw students' attention.

Capitalized Text: Key terms and vocabulary were presented in uppercase letters for emphasis.

Bolded Text: Emphasis was added to critical points through the use of bold font.

Enlarged Font Sizes: Selected text or headings were presented in larger font sizes to visually stand out.

Italicized Text: Certain sections or examples were italicized to denote their significance.

Bolded Blueprint Structures: Blueprint structures in essay samples were both italicized and bolded, making them particularly conspicuous.

The primary objective of this input enhancement technique was to actively engage the participants and draw their attention to the essential linguistic features necessary for effective essay writing. By employing these formatting strategies, the aim was to enhance their comprehension and awareness of these structural elements.

During the face-to-face class sessions, participants had the opportunity to interact with the teacher directly.

This allowed for immediate clarification of doubts and facilitated in-depth discussions about the highlighted linguistic features and structures. The teacher also provided comments and feedback on the students' work, offering personalized guidance and addressing any queries that arose during the class.

In summary, the Flipped Face-to-Face Class, as an experimental group with input enhancement, utilized printed notes enriched with formatting techniques to emphasize key linguistic features and structures relevant to essay writing. This approach encouraged active engagement, comprehension, and immediate clarification during face-to-face interactions with the teacher, contributing to the exploration of input enhancement's impact on the development of parallel structures in the writing skills of EFL learners within the face-to-face instructional context.

Figure 4

A Sample from one of Participants in the Flipped Face-to-Face Class

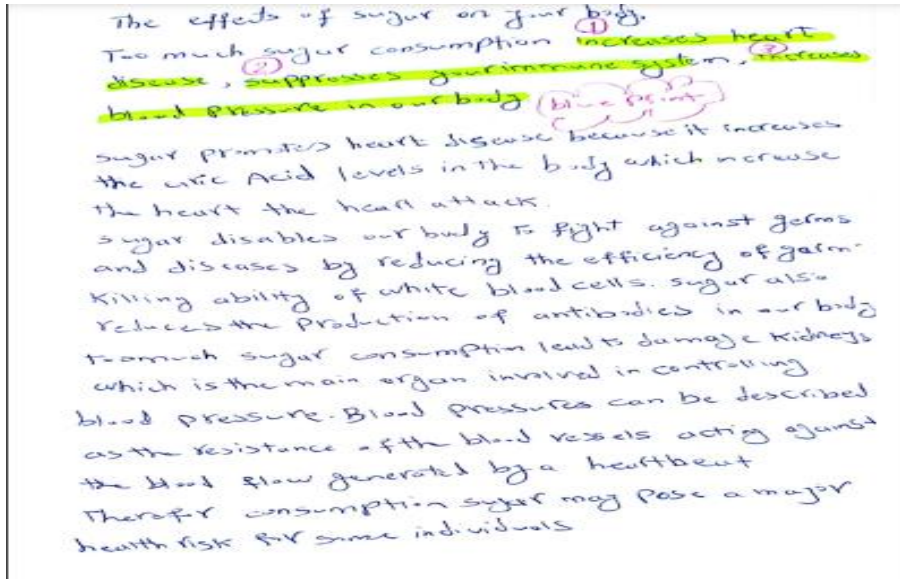


Figure 5

Treatment of Input Enhancement in Flipped Face-to-Face Class - Experimental Group

Type of Instruction: Flipped face-to-face

Resources: PowerPoint of the textbook; Teacher's printed material; slides of each session

Technique: Input enhancement: **Bolding**, *Italicizing*, highlighting, underlining, CAPITALIZING, large font size

Procedure

Step 1: Participants attended essay writing class. The printed material for the next session was made accessible one week prior to each class.



Step 2: Explanation of the essay writing process.



Step 3: Utilization of input enhancement techniques for blueprints in the printed samples.



Step Step 4: Writing an essay based on the teaching point by the students at home and receiving teacher feedback and comments in a face-to-face class.

3.4.3. Control Group

The control group adhered to their usual instructional method without any special intervention. They attended the regular in-person classes but did not receive the input enhancement techniques that were applied to the experimental groups. It is essential to address the nature of interaction between the control group and the teacher regarding the teaching content. During these in-person sessions, students engaged in discussions, sought clarifications, and interacted with the course material.

By including the control group, researchers were able to compare their performance with that of the experimental groups, thereby gaining valuable insights into the influence of input enhancement techniques on the utilization of parallel structures in essay writing.

3.5. Data Analysis

To evaluate the impact of input enhancement techniques on essay writing, we conducted a series of statistical analyses. The primary outcome measures were pretest and posttest scores. Firstly, an ANOVA test assessed linearity between posttest and pretest scores. Next, the homogeneity of regression slopes was examined to determine if the effect of pretest scores on posttest outcomes differed between groups. Levene's test confirmed comparable variances. Pearson correlations gauged inter-rater reliability. Lastly, a one-way ANCOVA compared posttest scores among groups, controlling for pretest scores. Assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variances were met. Effect sizes were interpreted following established benchmarks. These analyses provided insights into the impact of input enhancement techniques on essay writing proficiency, as discussed in the results section.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

Table 1 provides skewness and kurtosis indices assessing the normality of pretest and posttest scores across Online, Face-to-Face, and Control groups. The normality assumption was supported by the skewness and kurtosis indices presented in Table 1, where the ratios over the standard errors were below ± 1.96 .

Table 2 shows that "Input Enhancement Online" group has a mean score of 13.721, with a standard error of .179. The 95% confidence interval for this group's mean ranged from 13.364 to 14.077.

Table 1
Skewness and Kurtosis Indices of Normality

| Group | | N | Skewness | | Kurtosis | | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|--------------|----------|----|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|----------|
| | | | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic | Std. Error | | |
| Online | Pretest | 25 | -.369 | .464 | -.964 | .902 | -0.80 | -1.07 |
| | Posttest | 25 | -.565 | .464 | -.441 | .902 | -1.22 | -0.49 |
| Face-to-face | Pretest | 23 | -.115 | .481 | -.949 | .935 | -0.24 | -1.01 |
| | Posttest | 23 | -.579 | .481 | .415 | .935 | -1.20 | 0.44 |
| Control | Pretest | 27 | -.134 | .448 | -.611 | .872 | -0.30 | -0.70 |
| | Posttest | 27 | -.473 | .448 | -.053 | .872 | -1.06 | -0.06 |

The "Input Enhancement F2F" group had a lower mean score of 11.640, with a slightly higher standard error of .187. The 95% confidence interval for this group's mean ranged from 11.268 to 12.013. The "Control" group had the lowest mean score of 8.473, with a standard error of .172.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Posttest of Essay Writing

| Group | Mean | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Input Enhancement Online | 13.721 ^a | .179 | 13.364 | 14.077 |
| Input Enhancement F2F | 11.640 ^a | .187 | 11.268 | 12.013 |
| Control | 8.473 ^a | .172 | 8.130 | 8.815 |

The 95% confidence interval for this group's mean ranged from 8.130 to 8.815. The values provided in footnote "a" indicated that the covariate Pretest was evaluated at a specific value of 8.01.

Table 3
ANOVA Test for Linearity of Posttest and Pretest Scores

| | | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Posttest Pretest | * | (Combined) | 210.250 | 13 | 16.173 | 2.879 | .003 |
| | | Between Groups | 132.238 | 1 | 132.238 | 23.53 | .000 |
| | | Deviation from Linearity | 78.012 | 12 | 6.501 | 1.157 | .334 |
| | | Within Groups | 342.696 | 61 | 5.618 | | |
| | | Total | 552.947 | 74 | | | |
| | Eta-Squared | | .380 | | | | |

The linearity of the relationship between posttest and pretest scores in essay writing was assessed using an ANOVA test, and the results are presented in Table 3. The interaction between posttest and pretest scores is significant, suggesting a departure from linearity. However, the deviation from linearity itself is not statistically significant. The effect size (Eta-Squared) indicates that

approximately 38% of the variance in posttest scores can be explained by pretest scores.

Table 4 examines the equality of regression slopes across different groups. The group variable exhibited a significant effect on the dependent variable, as evidenced by the F-value of 17.463 with a p-value of .000. The effect size (partial eta squared) was determined to be .336, suggesting a moderate effect size. Similarly, the pretest variable demonstrated a significant effect on the dependent variable, with an F-value of 154.729 and a p-value of .000.

Table 4

Test of Homogeneity of Regression Slopes

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|--------|------|---------------------|
| Group | 27.412 | 2 | 13.706 | 17.463 | .000 | .336 |
| Pretest | 121.439 | 1 | 121.439 | 154.72 | .000 | .692 |
| Group * Pretest | 2.406 | 2 | 1.203 | 1.533 | .223 | .043 |
| Error | 54.154 | 69 | .785 | | | |
| Total | 9949.750 | 75 | | | | |

The effect size for the pretest was substantial, as indicated by a partial eta squared of .692. However, the interaction effect between the group and pretest was not found to be significant, as indicated by the non-significant F-value of 1.533 ($p = .223$) and a small effect size (partial eta squared = .043).

Table 5

Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances

| F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|------|-----|-----|------|
| .023 | 2 | 72 | .978 |

Table 5 displays the outcomes of Levene's test, which examined the homogeneity of variances across the three groups. The test yielded an F-value of .023 with 2 degrees of freedom, indicating that there was no significant difference among the compared three groups.

Table 6

Pearson Correlations

| | | PreR2 | PostR2 |
|--------|---------------------|--------|--------|
| PreR1 | Pearson Correlation | .793** | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 75 | |
| PostR1 | Pearson Correlation | | .915** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | | 75 |

Table 6 provides the Pearson correlations for inter-rater reliability between the pretest and posttest scores of essay writing. The correlation between PreR2 and PostR2 was .793, which was highly significant with a p-value of .000. The sample size for this correlation was 75. Similarly, the correlation between PreR1 and PostR1 was .915, also highly significant with a p-value of .000, and based on the same sample size of 75. This table suggested strong positive relationships between the pretest and posttest scores, indicating a high level of inter-rater reliability for assessing essay writing performance.

Table 7

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---------|-------------------------|----|-------------|---------|------|---------------------|
| Pretest | 129.414 | 1 | 129.414 | 162.452 | .000 | .696 |
| Group | 364.148 | 2 | 182.074 | 228.555 | .000 | .866 |
| Error | 56.561 | 71 | .797 | | | |
| Total | 9949.750 | 75 | | | | |

Table 7 displays the outcomes of the One-Way ANCOVA, showing significant differences in means between the three groups on the posttest of essay writing, while controlling for the pretest ($F(2, 71) = 228.55, p < .05, \eta^2 = .866$).

Table 8

Post-Hoc Comparison Tests for Posttest of Essay Writing

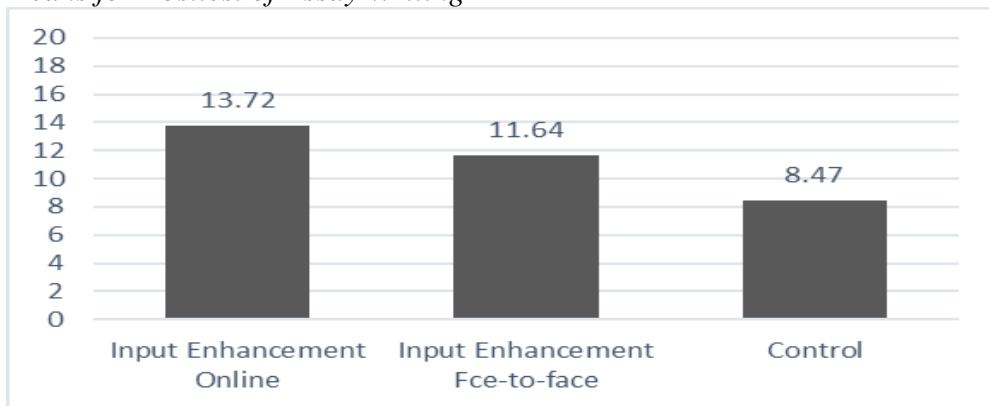
| (I) Group | (J) Group | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval for Difference | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|------|--|-------------|-------------|
| Input Enhancement Online | Input Enhancement F2F | 2.081* | .259 | .000 | 1.445 | 2.716 | |
| | Control | 5.248* | .248 | .000 | 4.641 | 5.856 | |
| Input Enhancement F2F | Control | 3.167* | .254 | .000 | 2.544 | 3.791 | |

Table 8 displays the post-hoc comparison tests for the posttest scores of essay writing between groups with pretest scores. The comparison between the "Input Enhancement Online" and "Input Enhancement F2F" groups showed a mean difference of 2.081, with a standard error of .259 and a highly

significant p-value of .000. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from 1.445 to 2.716, suggesting that the posttest scores for the "Input Enhancement Online" group were significantly higher than those for the "Input Enhancement F2F" group. Similarly, the comparison between the "Input Enhancement Online" and "Control" groups indicated a mean difference of 5.248, with a standard error of .248 and a significant p-value of .000. The 95% confidence interval for the difference lay between 4.641 and 5.856, indicating that the posttest scores for the "Input Enhancement Online" group were significantly higher than those for the "Control" group. Lastly, the comparison between the "Input Enhancement F2F" and "Control" groups showed a mean difference of 3.167, with a standard error of .254 and a significant p-value of .000. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from 2.544 to 3.791, indicating that the posttest scores for the "Input Enhancement F2F" group were significantly higher than those for the "Control" group. Figure 6 visually represents of the means on the posttest of essay.

Figure 6

Means for Posttest of Essay Writing



Overall, the study results suggest that implementing input enhancement techniques in both flipped online and face-to-face classes positively influenced the participants' use of parallel structures in essay writing.

4.2. Discussion

The primary objective of this research was to contribute to our understanding of the effectiveness of input enhancement techniques in enhancing the writing skills of EFL learners, with a specific focus on the use of parallel structures in essay writing. Additionally, we aimed to investigate the potential advantages of integrating technology-mediated learning environments, such as online and flipped classrooms, into language instruction. Our study outcomes offer valuable insights into the efficacy of

input enhancement in these instructional environments (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

In examining the findings within the context of the flipped online approach, our research underscores the significant impact of input enhancement techniques on EFL learners' proficiency in using parallel structures. The online group, which received input enhancement through the flipped online approach, demonstrated the highest level of proficiency in utilizing parallel structures. This suggests that the combination of input enhancement with the flipped online approach represents a highly effective instructional method for promoting language learning outcomes (Cho & Schunn, 2007; Hwang et al., 2015). Similarly, within the flipped face-to-face approach, our results reveal a significant effect of input enhancement on EFL learners' use of parallel structures. While the face-to-face group did not achieve the same level of performance as the online group, they demonstrated marked improvement compared to the control group. These findings indicate that integrating input enhancement techniques into the flipped face-to-face approach can also contribute significantly to enhancing learners' proficiency in using parallel structures (Cho & Schunn, 2007; Hwang et al., 2015).

The empirical results we have obtained provide robust evidence supporting the effectiveness of integrating input enhancement techniques to improve the utilization of parallel structures in essay writing among EFL learners. Importantly, these findings not only align with prior research emphasizing the positive influence of explicit instruction and practice on language learning outcomes but also extend this understanding to the context of both flipped online and face-to-face instruction (Challob, 2021; Lyster, 2004; Shooli et al., 2021; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Yousofi & Bashiri, 2023; Wu et al., 2020). This extension adds further support to the efficacy of this instructional approach. The observed differences in mean scores among the groups emphasize the effectiveness of the online group, followed by the face-to-face group, in their application of parallel structures. These results align with previous research comparing online versus face-to-face instruction for improving writing skills, as well as studies comparing flipped online versus flipped face-to-face approaches (Ahmed, 2016; Challob, 2021; Cho & Schunn, 2007; Dobakhti et al., 2023; Hwang et al., 2015; Qader & Yalcin Arslan, 2019; Shooli et al., 2021; Yousofi & Bashiri, 2023; Wu et al., 2020). Furthermore, the results underscore the fundamental role of explicit instruction and practice in language learning (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Lyster, 2004). Input enhancement techniques, through visual cues, highlighting, and explicit instruction, enable learners to focus their attention on specific language features. This heightened awareness and attention contribute to the learners' improved use of parallel structures, as evidenced by the higher mean scores of the online and face-to-face groups compared to the control group.

Our study's findings are also in line with the theoretical rationale for implementing flipped instruction, which is grounded in student-centered learning influenced by constructivist theorists like Piaget (1967) and Vygotsky (1978). This constructivist view emphasizes that learning is a process of constructing knowledge through interactions and individual sense-making (DeVries, 2000). In our study, the flipped online approach, combined with input enhancement techniques, facilitated an environment where students actively engaged with the content outside of class and demonstrated the highest proficiency in utilizing parallel structures. Cooperative learning, another theoretical basis for flipped instruction, fostered collaborative activities among students, which proved to be effective in the face-to-face approach (Foldnes, 2016; Lai & Hwang, 2016). Mastery learning principles, emphasizing feedback, regular retrieval practice, and a motivating learning environment, contributed to the development of proficiency in using parallel structures. Active learning principles, aligned with the active participation of students in classroom activities, supported the effectiveness of flipped instruction in enhancing EFL learners' use of parallel structures (Chen et al., 2019). Furthermore, the theoretical foundations of input enhancement, drawing from Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1990), Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1983), Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (1988), and Selinker's Interlanguage Theory (1972), provide a theoretical underpinning for the positive impact observed in parallel structure utilization. Our results resonate with these theoretical perspectives, emphasizing the role of enhancement in promoting noticing, cognitive processing, and interaction for effective language acquisition. In essence, our study's theoretical integration within the flipped instruction framework underscores the coherence and validity of our findings, offering a nuanced perspective on the synergy between theoretical principles and language skill development (Dobakhti et al., 2023; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Hwang et al., 2015; Cho & Schunn, 2007; Lyster, 2004; Qader & Yalcin Arslan, 2019).

In summary, our results highlight the successful application of theoretical principles within the flipped instruction framework. The combination of student-centered learning influenced by constructivist theorists, cooperative learning, mastery learning, and active learning principles significantly contributed to the positive outcomes observed in EFL learners' use of parallel structures. These findings not only support the theoretical justifications for flipped instruction but also emphasize the importance of incorporating theoretical foundations into instructional design.

The original contribution of our study, therefore, lies in its comprehensive examination of flipped instruction and input enhancement within the context of parallel structures in essay writing. While our findings resonate with existing research on the efficacy of explicit instruction and

practice, they extend this understanding to the unique context of technology-mediated learning environments, thus enriching the field of language education and offering practical guidance for educators. Ultimately, our study contributes to the advancement of effective teaching methods in language education, offering a nuanced perspective on the synergy between flipped instruction, input enhancement, and language skill development.

5. Conclusion and Implications

In conclusion, this study provides robust evidence supporting the effectiveness of input enhancement techniques in advancing EFL learners' proficiency in utilizing parallel structures in essay writing. These findings align seamlessly with prior research emphasizing the unequivocal positive impact of explicit instruction and deliberate practice on language learning outcomes. Beyond a mere recapitulation of results, our conclusion underscores the broader implications and contributions derived from these findings.

The study's contribution to the existing literature lies in its exploration of input enhancement's effectiveness within the distinctive contexts of flipped online and face-to-face instruction. The results demonstrate that strategically integrating input enhancement with flipped learning represents a highly effective instructional approach for enhancing language learning outcomes. Notably, the online group, exhibiting the highest proficiency in using parallel structures, underscores the potential of this approach.

From a practical perspective, these findings carry substantial implications for both EFL instructors and curriculum developers. EFL instructors can harness the power of input enhancement techniques, such as visual cues and highlighting, to enhance their teaching methodologies. By integrating these techniques into both traditional and online flipped instruction settings, instructors can offer a valuable pedagogical approach for nurturing parallel structure skills in their students. This approach, characterized by deliberate focus on these structures and ample opportunities for practice, empowers educators to effectively facilitate the acquisition and application of parallel structures in students' writing.

Furthermore, this study sheds light on the substantial benefits of employing flipped learning in language instruction. The combination of flipped learning and input enhancement techniques presents a potent combination that promotes self-directed learning, heightened engagement, and enhanced performance. Language instructors should contemplate the integration of flipped learning approaches into their instructional design to improve language learning outcomes and cultivate the effective use of parallel structures.

While this study has contributed significantly to our understanding of the effectiveness of input enhancement techniques in enhancing EFL learners' proficiency in utilizing parallel structures in essay writing, it is essential to recognize the inherent limitations. It is imperative to acknowledge that some of the limitations mentioned here are indeed conventional and well-established, but they remain critical to a comprehensive assessment of the study. First, the generalizability of the results may be somewhat constrained due to the specific sample of EFL learners employed in this study. This sample may not fully represent the broader diversity of EFL populations or instructional settings worldwide. As a result, caution should be exercised when applying these findings to different contexts. To enhance the external validity of the results, future research endeavors should prioritize the replication of this study with larger and more diverse samples of EFL learners. This would provide a more robust foundation for drawing generalizable conclusions and making informed pedagogical recommendations. Additionally, while this study predominantly relied on quantitative data collection methods to assess the impact of input enhancement techniques, it is essential to acknowledge the potential value of qualitative data collection methods. Qualitative methods, such as interviews or surveys, could offer deeper insights into learners' perspectives and experiences regarding the utilization of input enhancement techniques. These qualitative perspectives would enrich our understanding of the learners' perceptions, shed light on their preferences, and provide valuable feedback for refining instructional strategies. Therefore, future research should consider incorporating qualitative data collection methods alongside quantitative approaches to offer a more comprehensive assessment of the impact of input enhancement techniques. To conclude, this study contributes substantial knowledge regarding the effectiveness of input enhancement techniques in enhancing the application of parallel structures in essay writing for EFL learners. The results accentuate the undeniable importance of explicit instruction, structured practice, and the incorporation of visual cues in the realm of essay writing. By strategically leveraging the advantages of flipped learning and thoughtfully integrating input enhancement techniques, language educators can craft engaging and effective learning environments that not only foster learners' language proficiency but also elevate their writing skills, especially in the realm of utilizing parallel structures effectively.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express gratitude to the participants for their valuable time and dedication in participating in the experiments.

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