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The Impact of Toulmin's Model of Argumentation on the Argumentative Skills of Third-Year Students in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to:

My supportive parents Mohand Said and Djamila,

To my sisters, especially, Young and Lydia,

To Nabil my lovely brother,

To my beloved partner,

To my little angels Samy and Moumouh,

And, also, to all my friends who stood by my side.

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To my mother Dehbia, and my father Mohamed

To my lovely siblings Nardjess and Said.

To my beloved partner who always was there.

And to all my friends who supported me and stood by my side.

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Abstract

This dissertation is concerned with the impact of Toulmin's Model of Argumentation (TMA) (2003) on the argumentative writing skills Third-Year (L3) students in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou (MMUTO)(2021-2022). It is intended to determine the efficacy of the techniques and models that are employed to teach argumentation, along with the common difficulties students encounter when arguing academically. Additionally, it aimed at uncovering the impact of an alternative model (TMA) on students' argumentative capacities. To achieve the stated objectives Toulmin's Model of Argumentation is applied. The study has been an experimental research that has combined both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. For data collection, an online questionnaire is administered to fifty (50) Third-Year students selected randomly, and a structured interview is conducted with three (03) teachers of the reading and writing module at the Department of English. Concerning data analysis, the computer program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to analyze the numerical data obtained from the close-ended items of the questionnaire, and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is applied to interpret the findings reached from the open-ended questions of the interview and the questionnaire. TMA is utilized for the argument analysis of the pre and post-tests. The results of the study have demonstrated that the techniques and models teachers use do not have a direct influence on students' argumentative capacities. Moreover, the difficulties learners have faced are mostly 'evidential', 'organizational', and 'language-related' obstacles that could be found in academic writing in general and could not be treated by a model of a specific domain. As such, the results have shown that TMA has not permitted the production of satisfactory argumentative essays in the Department of English at MMUTO.

Keywords: *Academic argumentative writing, Argumentation, Argumentative essay difficulties, Teaching Argumentative writing, Toulmin's Model of Argumentation.*

List of Abbreviations

- **CBLT:** Competency-Based Language Teaching.
- **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language.
- **L 3:** Third-year Students.
- **MMUTO:** Mouloud Mammrie University of Tizi Ouzou.
- **QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis.
- **SPSS:** Statistical Package for Social Sciences.
- **TMA:** Toulmin's Model of Argumentation.
- **TPA:** Toulmin's Pattern of Argumentation.

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

‘Argument’ is a controversial term. It could refer to everyday arguments quarrels, spats, rows... that take place in domestic, professional and public contexts, but it also refers to the most highly prized type of academic discourse. In other words, arguments are deemed essential to a thesis, to an article in a research journal, to a dissertation, essay, and many other kinds of writing within schools and the academy. (Andrews, 2010)

Argumentation could be interpreted as the process of discourse where people produce and interchange reasons to support claims or defend/challenge positions (Lewenski and Mohaamed, 2016). The latter is considered to be a significant mechanism to filter information and think critically when considering the various opinions and information one receives daily. For these reasons, argumentation practices are pervasive in multiple disciplines. They are prominent in, to mention only a few, scientific inquiry, legal procedures, political institutions, and education.

In academia, specifically in second and foreign language learning, argumentation is sometimes manifested through written essays. Due to its centrality and complexity argumentation is taught relying on theories and models, ancient and contemporary, (Aristotle, Roger (1970), Toulmin (2003)...) researchers have designed to aid the successful production and interpretation of arguments. In the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University, Tizi Ouzou (MMUTO), for instance, where English is taught as a foreign language, a lecture on how to write argumentative essays is included in the curriculum; however, no research has been conducted to investigate what are the techniques utilized in the teaching process or to what extent the methods used are effective, or whether adopting another model has more potential in boosting students’ argumentative skills.

2. Aims and Significance of the Study

The current study aims to investigate what are the techniques employed to teach argumentative writing at the department of English at MMUTO. Moreover, this dissertation has the goal to explore the difficulties students encounter when writing their argumentative essays. Additionally, most importantly, this research focuses to determine whether Toulmin's model of argumentation would improve students' capacities further. This study is significant since it may offer current and future students at the department of English at MMUTO a chance to become active in the art of argumentation by transforming both teachers' and students' attitudes toward argumentation. Moreover, it may also alter the way argumentative writing is taught by pointing out some hardships and by offering an alternative to overcome them.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to attain the above goals and investigate the impact of Toulmin's model of argumentation on third-Year students in the department of English at MMUTO the following question are formulated:

Question 01: What are the models and techniques the reading and writing teachers in the Department of English at MMUTO rely on to teach argumentative writing?

Question 02: What are the academic writing difficulties third-year students in the Department of English MMUTO encounter while writing argumentative essays?

Question 03: To what extent could Toulmin's model of argumentation enhance the argumentative writing skill of Third-Year students at the department of English at MMUTO?

The following hypotheses are suggested to predict the results:

Hypothesis 01: Teachers in the Department of English at MMUTO apply the classical model to teach argumentation.

Hypothesis 02: Third-Year students encounter structural, vocabulary, and grammatical-related difficulties.

Hypothesis 03: Toulmin's model of argumentation may have a positive impact on the argumentative skills of Third-Year students in the department of English at MMUTO.

4. Research Techniques and Methodology

An experimental study is carried out to answer the asked questions and confirm or disconfirm the stated hypotheses. A pre-test is taken by participants from the population where they are asked to produce an argumentative essay following the techniques they have been taught. A random treatment group is then selected and exposed to Toulmin's model of argumentation. Finally, a post-test is conducted by both the control and treatment groups. The corpus of this investigation is essays written by participants from both the tests undertaken as well as responses from an interview that is directed to teachers specialized in the Reading and Writing modules in the Department of English at MMUTO and a questionnaire distributed to Third-Year students at the same department. The data gathered are qualitative and quantitative and thus the mixed method is adopted for the analysis. In other words, the quantitative data are analyzed using the computer program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the qualitative data are examined relying on argument analysis and Qualitative Context Analysis (QCA). To inspect the impact Toulmin's model of argumentation has on the argumentative skills of Third-Year students in the department of

English MMUTO and the difficulties they come across. The present study relies on Toulmin's model of argumentation as a theoretical framework.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

The overall structure of this dissertation follows the traditional simple format. It is composed of a General Introduction, four chapters, and a General Conclusion. The general introduction section introduces the general topic of the work and claims its centrality by signaling the gap it endeavors to fill. The first chapter provides the theoretical foundations of the study. The second chapter is devoted to 'Research Design' which explains the process of data collection and analysis. The third chapter is the 'Presentation of the Findings' which shows the results of the study. The 'Discussion of the Findings' is the fourth chapter and it deals with an in-depth discussion of the results and also answers the stated questions. Finally, the last chapter the 'General Conclusion' sums up the whole investigation and offers future recommendations.

1 Chapter one: Review of the Literature

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to contextualizing the current research by reviewing accurate literature. First, argumentation is defined along with its importance in social and academic contexts. Then, argumentation as manifested in education, as academic writing, is clarified along with its basic characteristics. Moreover, some argumentative writing teaching techniques are stated. Finally, an overall explanation of the theoretical framework is offered.

1.1 Argumentation

Robert Fogelin (1978) declares: *‘Arguments are all over us. They bombard us constantly in advertisements, in courtrooms, in politics, moral and religious debates, in academic courses or mathematics, science, history, literature, and philosophy...’* (1978: 01). That is to say, arguments permeate several aspects of our daily lives. An argument is a connected series of statements typically used to persuade someone of something or to present reasons for accepting a conclusion. This means, an argument is a set of propositions that contain premises offered to support a conclusion, and a premise is a proposition one offers in support of a conclusion, as justification for or a reason to believe it.

Alternatively, according to Hitchcock (2006) an argument is of complicated nature, it could be viewed as a complex speech act consisting of one or more acts of premising (which assert propositions in favor of the conclusion), and an act of concluding. In other words, an argument is an action, a deliberate attempt to move beyond just making an assertion, or a

claim. Frans H. van Eemeren (2018) In his book *Argumentation Theory: A Pragmatic-Dialectic Perspective* asserts that:

Argumentation is a communicative and interactional act complex aimed at resolving a difference of opinion with the addressee by putting forward a constellation of propositions for which the arguer is held accountable in order to make the standpoint at issue acceptable... (2018: 03)

To reformulate, argumentation consists of a combination of communicative acts (speech acts, or any other visual, written, or gestural acts) that constitute together the communicative act complex of argumentation, so one can think of argumentation as a part of a dialogue. In other words, it is not solely a communicative act that aims to give explanations, but also an interactional act that requires a response or acceptance from the addressee. Moreover, argumentation is a rational process of reason where the arguer is held liable for the group of propositions that is advanced (the premises). These propositions aim to convince the audience not emotionally, but by mutually shared critical standards of reasonableness. (Eemeren, 2018)

Richard Andrews (2010) associates argumentation to a social communicative activity of constructing and exchanging grounds. The author writes '*argumentation is seen as part of argument and suggests a sequence or exchange of arguments. It refers to something more technical. It is the process of arguing in educational...and other contexts* (2010: 02). Accordingly, there have been many claims made by scholars that emphasize the importance of argumentation in both social and academic settings (Habermas, 1984; Vygotsky, 1991; Richard Andrews, 2010; Emerene, 2018...).

McCarthy (1984) in the introduction to his translated edition of Habermas' major work on rationality and communication, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, highlights how through argumentation people can support their thoughts rationally by providing reasons and

evidence to convince those around them, not only that but also, how argumentation helps people express their beliefs and emotions as well. He claims:

we are constantly making claims, ... concerning the validity of what we are saying... regarding the truth of what we say in relation to the objective world; or claims concerning the rightness, appropriateness, or legitimacy of our speech acts in relation to the shared values and norms of our social life world; or claims to sincerity or authenticity in regard to the manifest expressions of our intentions and feelings (1984:18).

Even though the above assertion gives argumentation an important stature, Frans H. Van Eemeren in his book *Argumentation Theory: A Pragma-Dialectic Perspective*, argues that argumentation is at the heart of social development he argues:

Cultural, social and intellectual progress requires a continual flux of opinions. Standpoints need to be brought to the fore and confronted with the doubt and criticism of those concerned to test their acceptability. ... Argumentation is to be advanced to overcome the pertinent doubts and criticisms'. (2018:01)

That is, differences of opinion are inevitable for cognitive and social development and argumentation is an appropriate and rational tool to rely on to support one's viewpoint and provide reliable evidence to support a certain assertion and to reach a resolution for the divergence of views. This resolution could often only be temporary because, as mentioned above, new differences of opinion are bound to arise, and the process of interchanging arguments (argumentation) keeps originating new solutions that could lead to more enlightening ideas and new perspectives of viewing and interpreting the world. Argumentation, in sum, is the result of a disposition toward the rational, toward exploring the nature of difference and creating difference (Kress, 1989).

As a result, argumentation is an essential skill to acquire in order to belong socially and develop cognitively. For this reason, and according to a handful of scholars, integrating argumentation in education is crucial. One of the most remarkable works on the importance of argumentation in learning and education is done by Vygotsky. The author argues: [...]
there is an indubitable genetic connection between the child's arguments and his reflections.

(1991: 32) And Piaget, as cited in Vygotsky (ibid), asserts: '*Reflection, '... 'may be regarded as inner argumentation...*'. And according to these authors, argumentation fosters the development of the higher mental functions which are fundamental and central to learning and teaching since they help one learn to become competent in various disciplines, subjects, and fields. (Andrews, 2010)

Vygotsky (1984) also claims that the integration of argumentation in education could also alter learners' behaviors and reshape their reflections. In other words, argumentation is central in education and the process of learning since it not only helps in reshaping learner's reflection to help them become active, competent learners but it also changes their behavior towards learning, boosting their cognitive abilities and resulting in advancements in their creativity and the way they interpret, criticize, analyze ideas, standpoints, and claims. Consequently, Habermas (in McCarthy, 1984) assures that argumentation plays an important role in learning processes. He argues that a person is rational if he or she expresses reasonable opinions and has the ability to learn from mistakes, the refutation of hypotheses, and the failure of interventions. Andrews, then, explains:

Behavior in the academy is determined by the engines of inquiry and the sociology of teaching and learning within institutions and disciplines and, in due course, it informs and shapes further reflection/ thought. Within a rational paradigm, argumentation plays a key part in the development of such social relations. (Quoted from: *Argumentation in Higher Education improving Practice through Theory and Research*, 2010:15)

In sum, argumentation is the process of developing arguments, the exchange of views, and seeking and provision of good evidence to support claims and prepositions. As such, and due to its centrality in both social and cognitive spheres argumentation is the principal interest of education. (Andrews: 2010)

1.2 Argumentation in Education

Argumentation, according to the European Recommendation for lifelong learning (EU), is one of the main skills related to key competencies, defined as the capacity “*to express one’s oral and written arguments in a convincing way appropriate to the context*” (2006:04). The latter could be manifested in a variety of both written and spoken forms in education. (Andrews, 2010) The author suggests the following written forms: position and research papers, dissertation thesis, and essays. These forms are different from one another, each requires a specific form, terminology, and overall content, they, however, are all considered as types of academic writing. Learners and writers in general, should, in order to master this skill, attain a good level of discourse competence.

1.2.1 Discourse Competence

Discourse competence derives from the theory of communicative competence and it occurs in all of its models in a language. The view that communicative competence in a language includes a number of different dimensions was first proposed by Hymes (1972), as a response to Chomsky’s concept of competence as distinct from performance (Chomsky, 1965). According to Hymes, Chomsky’s view of competence in language seems to ignore the vital role of socio-cultural features inherent in human communication. To highlight the importance of such socio-cultural elements, Hymes (1972) proposes communicative competence as the state of having knowledge (grammar rules and ability), with this knowledge appropriately used in context. Canale and Swain (1980) further develop their own theoretical framework of communicative competence which is categorized into three components according to Canale (1983):

- 1) Grammatical competence (concerns with mastery of the language code itself);

2) Sociolinguistic competence (addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending contextual factors); and

3) strategic competence (is composed of mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action for two main reasons: (a) to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to limiting conditions in actual communication or to insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of communicative competence; and (b) to enhance the effectiveness of communication).

In a development of the concept of communicative competence proposed in his previous work (Canale and Swain, 1980). Canale (1983) further elaborates on sociolinguistic competence to include discourse competence, which he proposes as mastery of combining grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres. Discourse competence, as a component element of communicative competence, therefore, is a crucial element of the competences required by students when engaged in academic reading and writing. Developing this competence has been considered as a particular challenge by ESL learners.

Discourse competence generally means the ability to understand and produce extended speech and written features which assists connectedness and cohesion (Kaplan & Knutson, 1993) in different spoken and written texts/genres. In the model of Celce-Murcia et al. (1995), discourse competence includes the five components: “cohesion, deixis, coherence, generic structure and conversational structure inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation.

1.2.2 Defining Academic Writing

The written language has nowadays an important social and educational function and its status has a high social prestige as Fulwiler states: *'writing enables human thoughts to become visible, allows them to be developed, and be modified, and helps new ideas to be triggered'* (2002: 32). And in formal settings such as education, and academia, particularly, teachers and students rely on academic writing for different purposes. Academic writings are, as works cited and translated in Ahmet Akkaya and Gunlur Aydin (2018) reports that *'describe original research results'* Day (2005) *'with a strong structured intellectual system'* (Bayat, 2004: 157), and requires *'logic, clarity, truth'* (Aceto, 2003: 08) In other words, academic writing has various types but regardless of its specific form it is important for any piece of academic writing to be clear, understandable, remarkable, and concise, and to be presented in a certain order by ensuring coherence and cohesion among its subsections (Akin, 2009). An argument is a type of academic writing thought of as an appeal to reason in which a writer develops a position, sometimes called a point of view or thesis, on a topic or question. Argumentative writing or essay is generally a piece of academic writing that *'is built around a specific statement (or main premise) that is debatable within the field in which you are studying'*. (Daly, 1997:01) In other words, it demands students to explore a topic, gather, develop, and analyze evidence, and articulate a concise viewpoint on the topic.

Argumentative essays are different from other types of essays in three important ways: they require analysis of evidence, they involve arguing for or against a position, and they display the writer's understanding of the topic through well-organized ideas supported by appropriate evidence and examples. This has been stated by Piggot-Irvine (2001) who states that in argumentative writing, the writer should write to be read not to express one' self. He/

she should meet the readers'/ audiences' expectations for the genre he is writing, and he/she also should develop his voice as reliable and authoritative.

1.2.3 Techniques for Teaching Argumentative Writing

Teaching writing, in general, in EFL classrooms is a challenging task; the same could be said about teaching argumentative essays, the teacher faces various kinds of challenges as are prevalent in most EFL settings. Writing argumentative essays presents specific difficulties for students concerning content, structure, textual organization as well as linguistic coding (Applebee et al., 1990; Hays et al., 1988; Marchand et al., 1996).

There are, of course, multiple reasons behind unsatisfactory argumentative writing skills. Wingate (2012), for example, clarifies that teaching argumentative writing mostly emphasizes rhetorical and linguistic structures but pays less attention to the organization of argumentation, even though, (according to Fan, Lee et al.) organization of argumentation is very important in an argumentative essay. Koh (2004) adds that one of the reasons for students' failure to perform well in argumentative writing is their lack of knowledge about good argumentation; therefore, they cannot integrate related evidence, results, and opinions, and thus, they cannot eventually form an argumentative essay. There are, however, only a few research studies in the literature that emphasized instructional strategies designed to help improve students' argumentative writing (Varghese & Abraham, 1998).

Authors such as Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein in their book *They Say, I Say, moves that matter in academic writing* (2016) suggest using templates to learn argumentative academic writing. These templates could be used by learners to improve their skills and that is by learning how to Introduce an ongoing debate (a topic), then Introduce what others say about the topic, and finding evidence as to why they believe in that by learning 'the art of quoting' and 'the art of summarizing'.

The above technique, however, seems to be vague, especially in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes. Alternatives have been given by a few other experts. Shaha (2017), for instance, suggests that teachers can consider planning and designing multilayered but mutually connected writing classes that would allow learners to self-assess their progress after completion of every stage of writing and set a personal target for the next stage to keep pace with the overall lesson objectives. Rapanta (2009), in *Argumentation Strategies in the Classroom* offers a few key steps to teaching argumentation. The author argues that to teach argumentation, teachers should start by enhancing students' argumentation skills which implies supporting their reasoning about everyday and scientific issues in ways that such reasoning becomes more critical (van Gelder, Bissett, & Cumming, 2004), contextualized (Sadler & Fowler, 2006), evaluative (Driver, Newton, & Osborne, 2000), sense-making (Berland & Reiser, 2009) to do so the expert mentions that teachers' implementation of argumentative discourse in the classroom requires the implementation of a dialogue-based pedagogy, and mostly what is known as dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008). In other words, teachers should create a classroom environment which allows students to exchange arguments.

To put it simply, the author summarizes a few key argumentative skills that teachers should foster in order to successfully teach argumentative writing, the writer suggests some main skills. First, teachers should teach students how to construct and identify valid arguments with an emphasis on how to support their claims. Then, lecturers should stress the importance of considering alternative arguments and/or counterarguments. Finally, tutors should guide students to anticipate and/or reply to counterarguments.

A compilation of other general writing strategies assembled from a verity of experts could also be used to teach argumentative writing in EFL classes. According to Shannon O'Mealia (2011: 2), "*strategy instruction in the prewriting stage improves student writing in*

terms of content, organization, and voice, and also improves student's motivation and creativity towards writing." Teachers, then, could start the class with an appropriate prewriting task that activates students' schemata as well as makes them find scope to generate ideas and outline the arguments. They could also demonstrate that they enjoy writing and choose strategies that make writing fun for the learners. Cohen & Cowen (2010) support this concept and they emphasize that teachers need to model a love for writing and embrace writing as a fun activity. To do that, a teacher could start the class with a mini-debate because through debate students can brainstorm on the topic as well as understand the basic concept of an argumentative essay. This prewriting strategy also presents writing as an exciting activity.

It is also important for teachers to make students understand the concept and structure of an argumentative essay better and write the essay appropriately, this could be done by clarifying the basic concept and structure of argumentative essay teachers could use exemplar essays. This could allow teachers to provide sufficient instructional scaffolding. Instructional scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1986 & Bruner, 1986) refers to types of support provided by teachers to help students accomplish a specific task. The zone of proximal development could also be helpful.

Additionally, teachers should provide each of the students with appropriate feedback at different phases of writing and on different aspects of argument essays. This could mean that teachers could ask students to practice writing by drafting, revising, and editing because according to Ur (2003), writing is a messy business, most people progress through a number of untidy drafts before reaching a final version.

1.3 Toulmin's Model of Argumentation (TMA)

The Toulmin model is a style of producing and analyzing arguments developed by the British logician and philosopher Stephen E. Toulmin in his book *The Uses of Argument* in 2003. In this book, the author defines an argument as: '*An argument is like an organism. It has both a gross, anatomical structure and a finer, as-it were physiological one*'. (2003: 87). In other words, the structure of an argument is a complex made possible by a mixture of a multitude of smaller elements that result in a whole. These elements are what characterize an argument with logical forms and make it accepted or disapproved.

Consequently, in contrast to the classical model which is a style of argumentation developed by the Greek philosopher Aristotle and is divided into five elements. These elements consist of an introduction, which consists of the statement of the general claim of the argument. Narration provides a summary of the background information relevant to the argument. Confirmation is the supporting evidence of the claim. Refutation is where the opposing claims are presented or acknowledged, and then addressed accordingly. Last, the main points are summarized in the conclusion

Toulmin has divided an argument into six (06) parts. The first three are fundamental to any argument: the claim, the grounds, and the warrant. The remaining three are not as fundamental but are necessary both to analyze and to produce logically formed and valid arguments they consist of: backing, qualifier, and rebuttal.

1.3.1 Claim, grounds and warrant

Toulmin asserts that: '*A man who makes an assertion puts forward a claim—a claim on our attention and to our belief*' (2003:11). To reformulate, a claim is the thesis statement that answers the question of what the writer/ speaker is trying to prove.

‘...If this claim is challenged, we must be able to establish it—that is, make it good, and show that it was justifiable [...]we shall normally have some facts to which we can point in its support,... and present them as the foundation upon which our claim is based.’ (2003:11)

Namely, the grounds or data are the supporting material or evidence presented in support of the claim to grant it validity and truthfulness. Without these data, the construction of an argument would not be made possible because without evidence to support them, claims one makes in a piece of writing have little to no value. (Murray, 2012)

As claims necessitate grounds, these pieces of evidence also require the aid of another kind. Warrants are defined as ‘... *propositions of a rather different kind: rules, principles, inference-licensed or what you will, instead of additional items of information.*’ (2003:91) that is, they are agreed-upon values or rules applied to specific situations and thus are conventional. These could either be stated or implied and they help to prove that the claim or conclusion is ‘...*an appropriate and legitimate one.*’(2003:92) Toulmin adds ‘*data are appealed to explicitly, warrants implicitly. In addition, one may remark that warrants are general, certifying the soundness of all arguments of a specific type.*’(ibid)

1.3.2 Backing, qualifier and rebuttal

Toulmin suggests three other elements of an argument that are mandatory especially when the claim made could somehow have certain drawbacks in specific situations. First, backing could be defined as the additional support that offers justification and exemplification for the warrant, which is mostly implied and makes it clear by the inclusion of examples that justify it. Toulmin (2003: 96) states: ‘...*standing behind our warrant, as this reminds us, there will normally be other assurances without which the warrants themselves would possess neither authority nor currency, these other things we may refer to as backing of the warrant.*’

The next element in Toulmin's argument is used to avoid the overgeneralization of claims and warrants. In other words, an assertion one makes could not be applicable to every situation. Thus there must sometimes be some cases where people have to give probability a chance when arguing. This qualifier, according to Toulmin, gives the claim and warrants more validity and accuracy. This element is a model qualifier and Toulmin defines it as *...some explicit reference to the degree of force our data confer on our claim in virtue of our warrant* (2003:96)

A model qualifier could lead to a condition of exception or rebuttal which in itself is an element of the model. It could be vaguely seen as the other possible solutions available to that specific situation, classically it could be referred to as the 'opposing views'. Rebuttal in Toulmin's words is *'...indicating circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside.'*(2003:94) In other words, rebuttal could be seen as the acknowledgment of another valid view of a certain situation.

Locker and Keene have argued in favor of using Toulmin's Argument to teach argumentation. The authors find Toulmin's Pattern of Argumentation (TPA) both straightforward and easy to apply for students due to *'its simplicity, completeness, and heuristic power'*. (1983:103). In other words, Toulmin's model is simple because it breaks down an argument into six parts which according to Lindsey M. Ellis (2015) benefits both the teachers and the students to analyze and formulate valid arguments.

Conclusion

To conclude, this section has highlighted the important notions relatable to this work by first, defining argumentation from multiple perspectives and highlighting its importance in both social and academic contexts. Then, a brief focus on discourse competence and academic writing, and their significance in writing in general and argumentative writing in particular, is

included. Next, a few varied techniques on how to teach argumentative essays effectively in EFL classes, according to different scholars, are suggested. Finally, a detailed explanation of the theoretical framework, Toulmin's Model of Argumentation (TMA) is provided.

2 Chapter two: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is methodological. It describes the techniques, as well as, the procedures of both data collection and data analysis utilized to answer the questions that have been asked in the current research entitled ‘The Impact of Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation on the Argumentative skills of Third Year students at the Department of English at MMUTO.’ This section is divided into two elements. The first part, Procedures of Data Collection, includes the research method, the context, and participants of the study, and the procedures of data collection. The second part, Procedures of Data Analysis, deals with the methods used to analyze the data that have been gathered.

2.1 Procedures of Data Collection

2.1.1 Research Method

Since the goal of this research paper is to reveal the impact of Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation on the argumentative writing of Third-Year students at the department of English at MMUTO, an experimental research has been chosen to fulfill this objective. According to Creswell (2007), an experimental research is the objective, systematic, controlled investigation that provides and controls phenomena and examines probability and casualty among selected variables. In other words, an experimental research could be seen as a research that is conducted with a scientific approach using two variables (independent and dependent variables). In this particular research, a pretest-posttest design is employed. The latter is widely used to measure change resulting from an experimental treatment. It is made possible by conducting an experiment in which measurements are taken on individuals both before and after they are involved in a treatment. To explain, random individuals are selected

and divided into control and treatment groups, both groups undertake the same pretest. Afterward, the treatment group is presented to the treatment then a posttest is again retaken by both groups. The results from both tests are then analyzed and an inference would be drawn on the effect of the independent variable (TMA) on the dependent variable (students' argumentative capacities).

2.1.2 Context and Participants of the Study

The current research is conducted at the Department of English at MMUTO during the academic year 2021/2022. The participants are Third-Year students in the mentioned department and are selected through random sampling. The population is selected because dissertation writing starts at this level. Additionally, Third-Year students deal with argumentative writing making it the most preferable context for research. Random sampling is a part of the sampling techniques in which each sample has an equal probability of being selected, and it is used to make generalizations about a large population. As such, random sampling is utilized in this paper. The corpus consists of fifty (50) pre-test essays, forty (40) posttest essays, fifty (50) questionnaires distributed to Third-Year students, and three (03) interviews with the teachers of the Reading and Writing module.

2.1.3 Data Collection Tools

In addition to the data collected from argument analysis of essays written by Third-Year students, two data collection tools are added to investigate the impact of Toulmin's model of argumentation on the argumentative skills of Third-Year students at the department of English at MMUTO, these tools consist of a questionnaire and an interview. An online questionnaire is administered and sent online (via messenger and Facebook) to fifty (50), randomly chosen,

third-year students. Three interviews are then scheduled with three (03) teachers of the Reading and Writing module.

2.1.3.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are among the most valuable and supportive research instruments for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Brown (2001: 06) defines the questionnaire as “*any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers*”. Simply, it is a set of written items to be answered by respondents to get information about a particular topic. In this particular research, a questionnaire has been designed in order to figure out students’ capacities and difficulties in producing an argument and to determine their views on Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation. This questionnaire contains thirteen (13) close-ended items, in which students provide precise responses by a simple “yes” or “no” answer, or by selecting an accurate choice from a set of pre-given prepositions, and an additional seven (07) open-ended items which allow students to express their own opinion by justifying their choices. The questionnaire is divided into three (03) main sections: argumentative writing difficulties, writing an argumentative essay, and Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation. It was piloted when distributed to ten students in the Department of English at MMUTO before the official online version.

2.1.3.2 Interview

An interview is also employed as a second instrument in this current study to collect qualitative data. Gillham (2000:01) defines the latter as “*a conversation where one person – the interviewer – is seeking the response for a particular purpose from the other person – the interviewee*”. This particular interview took place during the academic year 2021/2022 on

May, 25 th at the Department of English at MMUTO, with three teachers of the Reading and Writing module. Its purpose was to investigate the techniques used by the teachers to teach argumentation, to unearth the most common difficulties students encounter when producing their argumentative writing, and to reveal teachers' view points on Toulmin's Model of Argumentation and its predictable impact on students' skills. This interview is structured it contains (6) items conducted precisely with three (03) teachers of the reading and writing module. A written form has also been provided by the teachers.

2.2 Procedures of Data Analyses

This section presents the methods adopted to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data assembled from both the questionnaire and the interview. The quantitative data are analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), whereas the qualitative data are interpreted using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).

2.2.1 Quantitative Analysis

For the analysis of the numerical data gathered from the closed-ended questions of the questionnaire as well as from the argument analysis of students' essays, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is used. The latter is defined as a '*general statistical software tailored to the needs of social scientists and the general public*' (Blumenthal, 2010: 1). In other words, it is a computer program that helps to analyze statistical data and organize them into tables and diagrams.

2.2.2 Qualitative analysis

As for the remaining data, Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) was adopted to analyze the qualitative data gathered from the interview and the questionnaire. It is defined as "*any*

qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (Patton, 2002:453). Krippendorff (1980:18) also argues that it is “*a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use... As a research technique, content analysis provides new insights, increases researchers’ understanding of particular phenomena, or informs practical actions”*. To conduct content analysis, the researcher collects data from a set of texts that can be oral, written or visual, such as public speeches, videos, and interviews. It allows researchers to understand and interpret qualitative information and divide them into categories and themes within the texts, in a subjective but scientific manner. In this particular research, QCA was used by dividing the information obtained from the data collection tools into the most integral categories then an analysis has been made accordingly.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the research design adopted to conduct this study. First, it depicted the research method which is the experimental research, the context/corpus, and the population of the study. Then, it presented the data collection tools which are a questionnaire and an interview. Moreover, it included the methods used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the instruments and the corpus. The Rule of three is used to describe the numerical data collected from the questionnaire, while Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used to analyze the qualitative data of the interview and the questionnaire. These methods allow an overall in-depth understanding of the research problem.

3 Chapter three: Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is empirical. It deals with the presentation of the findings obtained from the questionnaires administered to fifty (50) Third-Year students. It also shows the results of the structured interview conducted with three of the Reading and Writing module teachers in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. Moreover, it highlights the pre and post-test analysis of students' essays. For the sake of readability and visibility, the results are presented in percentages and displayed in tables, diagrams, and pie charts. The chapter is split into three main parts. The first part covers the findings of the semi-structured interview which are analyzed with Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). The second part presents the results obtained from the questionnaire which are analyzed through the computer program called (SPSS). And the last part offers the argument analysis of both the pre and posttests essays.

3.1 Presentation of the Results of the Interview

This part presents the results of the structured interview conducted with three (03) Reading and Writing module teachers at the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. The teachers answered relying on their experience with teaching argumentative writing. The results are analyzed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), which helps to gain insights into the models, and techniques that are employed to teach argumentation, the different difficulties students encounter when arguing, as well as teachers' opinions about Toulmin's Model of Argumentation.

Question one: Do you think argumentation is of central importance in academia?

And if yes may you offer a brief justification?

All three teachers agreed on ‘argumentation is central to education’. They justify their answer by stating that argumentation plays a key role in students’ academic success because it helps them develop their critical thinking and persuasion skills. Moreover, they argue that argumentation discourse could be used in multiple writings such as essays, articles, and, most importantly, research papers, and thus an advanced argumentation style is crucial in students’ academic journey.

Question two: Would you explain the model and the techniques you rely on to teach argumentative writing?

One teacher claims to use eclectic approaches to teach their students argumentative writing. The two others argue to use the classical model of argumentation, along with a few of Toulmin’s model elements. They all state in their answers that they divide essays into major components, such as the introduction that contains a hook, and a claim, and teach each part solely to facilitate their students learning capacities.

Question three: Does the model you use allow students to reach their argumentation purposes? In other words, is it adequate?

The teachers state that the models including the classical model and the eclectic approach, if understood well and put in use are adequate to produce well-structured and strongly formed arguments. The teachers claim, however, that theoretical frameworks do not directly enhance students’ argumentative academic writing capacities, and that other factors such as writing practices, in general, are what could increase students’ skills.

Question four: What are the obstacles your students encounter when producing their argumentative essays?

The three teachers agree on certain common difficulties. Organizational difficulties have been at the top of the list, the participants state that most of their students do not properly structure their essays. Students' inadequate mastery of the different discourse types is considered as one of the reasons for the latter, and also one of students' impenetrability. Another difficulty has to do with insufficient language mastery and vocabulary manipulation. In other words, teachers claim that most students use erroneous terminology in specific contexts. One teacher adds that punctuation as well as grammatical and spelling mistakes are real barriers faced by the students.

Question five: Do you think utilizing Toulmin's model of argumentation would result in more favorable outcomes?

One teacher argues that yes Toulmin's Model of Argumentation if taught well could positively affect students' argumentative capacities. The two other teachers however state that the model does not have a direct influence on students' outcomes, and many factors are behind the lack of their mastery.

3.2 Presentation of the Results of the Questionnaire

This second part covers the results obtained through the questionnaires and they were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS), which is a computer program for quantitative data.

A. Section One: Argumentative Writing Difficulties

Item 01: Argumentation is crucial in both academic and social contexts:

More than half the students, (27) of them or (54%), agree with the above claim while twenty-one (21) which represent (41%) strongly agree with the assertion. The two remaining students, which equal (4%), disagree.

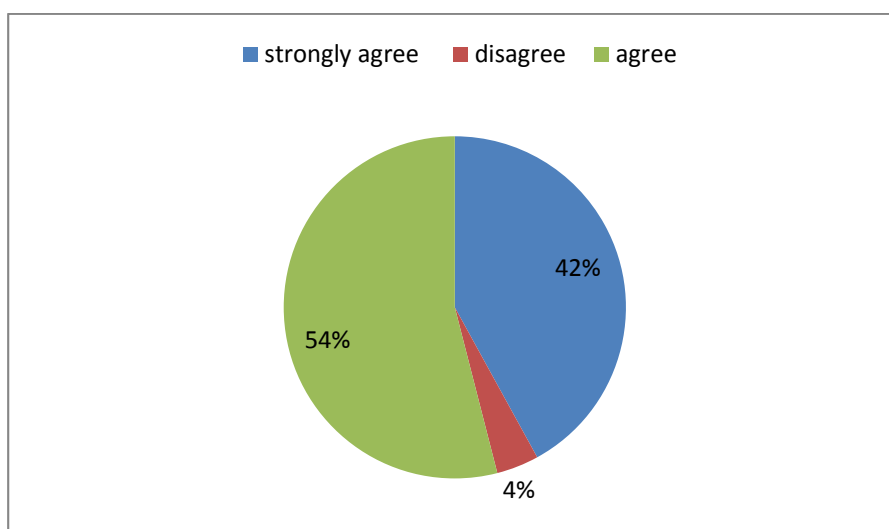


Diagram 1: Students' Attitudes toward Argumentation

❖ Would you justify your choice?

For the students who strongly agreed with the claim, they argue that argumentation not only helps them to share their opinion on things, but it is also a way to prove the correctness of their stance. They also stated that argumentation is crucial since it allows them to figure out others' points of view. Those who agreed with 'argumentation is crucial in both academic and social contexts' claim that argumentation allows them to peacefully and rationally express their thoughts and convince others of their beliefs. Lastly, the students who disagree claim that argumentation is an academic subject as many others.

Question 02: What are the common difficulties you encounter while producing your argumentative essays?

Eighteen students, representing (36%), claim to have “evidential” difficulties when writing their essays, and the same percentage of students (36%) face “vocabulary-related” issues. Seven of them which equal (14%), on the other hand, argue having “structural/organizational” complexities.

Type of difficulty	Answers	Percentages %
Structural	07	14%
Lexical and grammatical	05	10%
Evidential	18	36%
Vocabulary	18	36%
Others	02	4%

Table 1: The Common Difficulties Students Encounter when Writing Argumentative Essays.

B. Section two: writing an Argumentative Essay:

Question 03: Where do you usually place your claim in your argumentative essay?

The majority of students thirty-nine or (78%), place their claim in their introduction, while eleven which is (22%) prefer stating it in the body paragraphs. None of the students, however, put a claim in the conclusion.

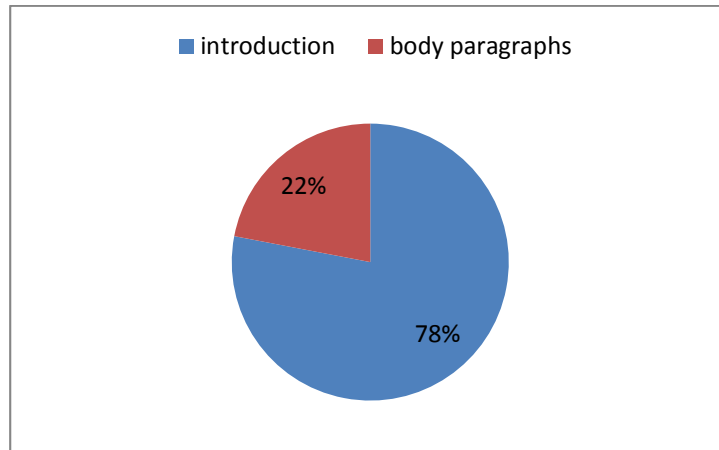


Diagram 2: Students' Claim Placement

Question 04: Do you state your claim explicitly?

Almost half the students, twenty-four or (48%), sometimes claim their claim explicitly. Twenty-two or (44%) of them do state their claim, but three representing (6%) of them do not state their claim, explicitly.

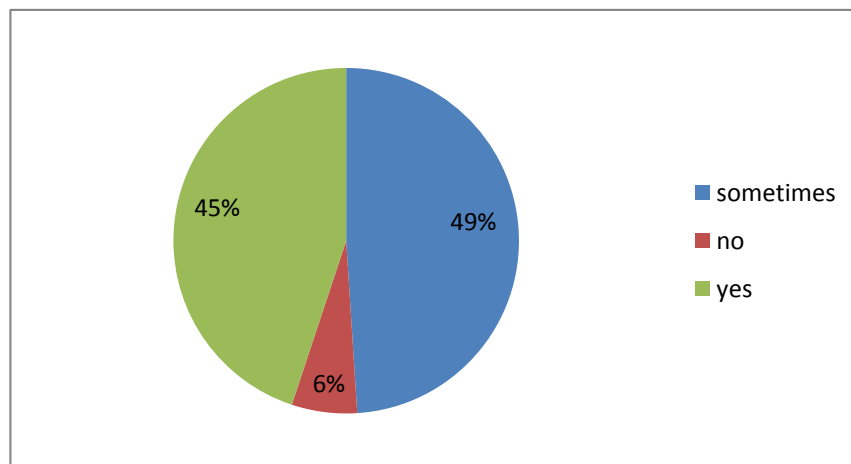


Diagram 3: Students' Claim Statement

❖ **Would you justify why?**

Some of the students who sometimes state their claim explicitly declare that it depends on the topic of their essay; the others affirm that the evidence in their essays is enough to show

their stand. Those who answered with yes claim that it is important to state one's claim in order to give their essay more credibility and stronger grounds. Finally, those who have answered with a no argue that it is not necessary to state a clear claim since there are many hints to demonstrate their point of view. Additionally, they think that they do not always take a claim hence they cannot state any.

Question 05: How far do you agree with the following statement?

'Being scientific rather than speculative is necessary for good argumentative essays'

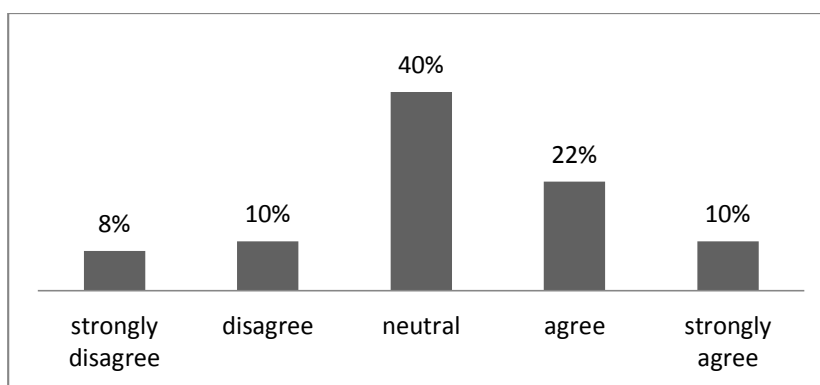


Diagram 4: Students' Attitudes towards Scientific Evidence

As the previous diagram illustrates, a total of fourteen representing (18%) of the students disagree with the statement. The majority of them, however, twenty which equals to (40%), remain neutral about it. The rest, sixteen or (32%) of them agree with the statement.

❖ Would you state the reason behind your stance?

The students who strongly disagree with the statement claim that in some cases being emotional is more convincing than being scientific. Similarly, the students who disagree with it state that being rational is not always a convincing manner. Those who remained neutral, affirm that using both scientific and emotional evidence is equally important depending on the topic at hand. The students who agree argue that science is factual then is the best way to both defend one's claim and convince others of one's point of view.

Question 06: How often do you include the sources and references from where you extracted your evidence?

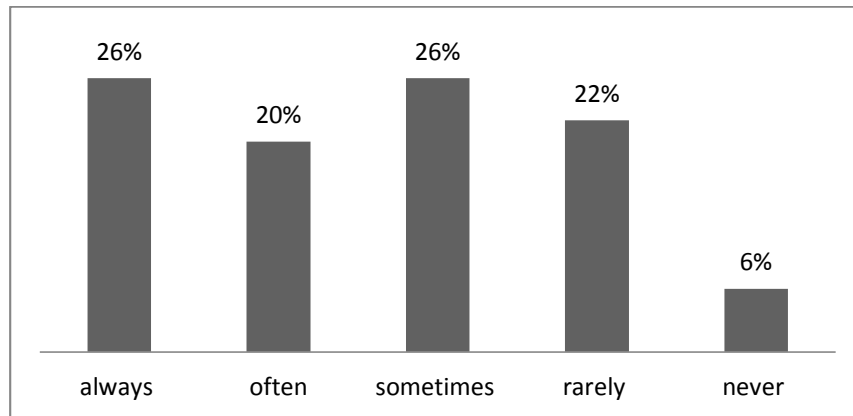


Diagram 5: Participants' Referencing Rate

From the diagram above, it could be concluded that two equal portions, (26%) of students, “always” and “sometimes” include references in their argumentative essays. Eleven or (22%) of them “rarely” use sources, closely to this, (10) students which equals (20%) only “often” include references. Three (08%) students however never include any in their argumentative writing.

❖ Would you please indicate why?

For the students who “always” include sources and references in their argumentative writing, these are critical to be both convincing and reliable because they give a sense of knowledge and information accessibility that allow others to check the validity of their opinion. Additionally, they state that source inclusion is the only way to avoid plagiarism. This view is also shared by the students who often use referencing. Meanwhile, the students who “sometimes” use references argue that the topic of their writing sometimes does not have any sources because the grounds are only personal or emotional. The remaining students who “rarely” or “never” use any references claim that essays do not necessitate any references.

Question 07: How often do you include warrants/ assumptions to back up your ideas when writing argumentative essays?

The questionnaire reveals that twenty-three representing (46%) of the total participants “often” use assumptions in their essays. Thirteen participants representing (26%) “sometimes” include warrants. Eight or (16%) among them “always” use the latter. While six, which equal (12%) either “rarely” or “never” include any assumptions in their dissertations.

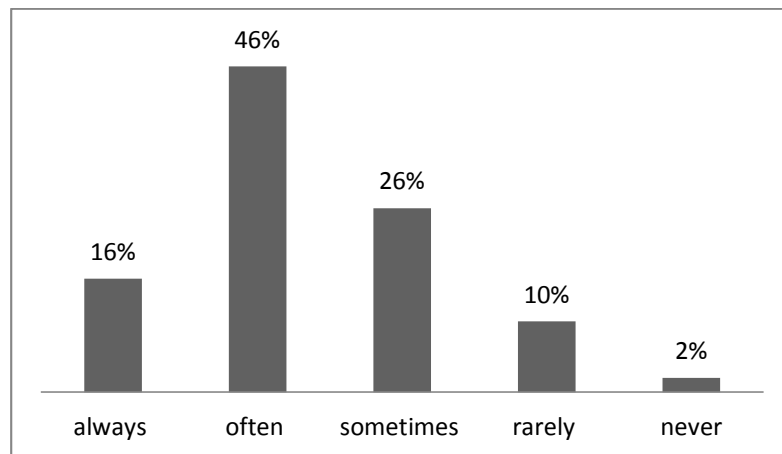


Diagram 6: Warrant Inclusion Frequency in Argumentative Essays

Question 08: Do you think these assumptions make evidence/ grounds more reliable?

The individuals who answered with a “Yes” agree that assumptions/warrants add more reliability because they are common beliefs shared among people making claims more believable. The students who answered with “No” claim that assumptions are only hypotheses that do not add any value to the claim or the grounds.

	Answers	Percentages %
Yes	38	76%
No	12	24%

Table 2: Students' Attitudes toward the Inclusion of Assumptions in their Argumentative Essays

Question 09: How often do you include qualifiers in your argumentative essays so far?

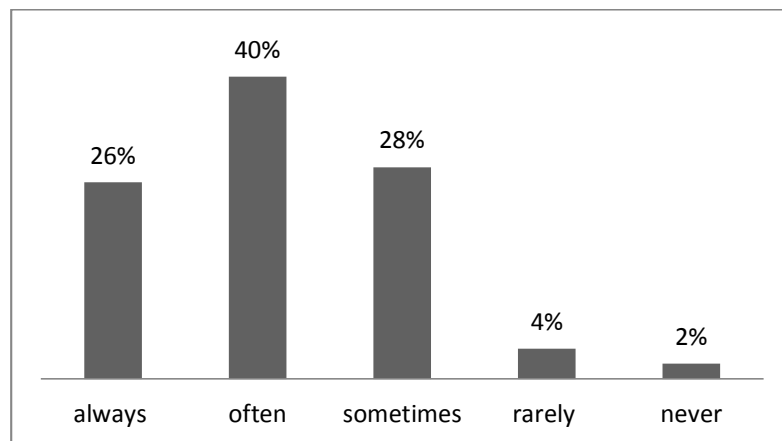


Diagram 7: Students' Use of Qualifiers

The graph shows that twenty or (40%) of the individuals who participate in this study often incorporate qualifiers in their essays. Fourteen students representing (28%) “sometimes” use qualifiers. Thirteen or (26%) “always” include them. And three which represents (06%) “rarely” or “never” use them.

Question 10: How important do you think the inclusion of qualifiers in argumentative writing is?

The answers of the questionnaire demonstrate that thirty-seven or (74%) of the participants think that qualifiers are “important” in argumentative writing. Eleven of them

which equal (22%) find qualifiers “very important”, and only two or (4%) claim that the latter are “unimportant”.

	Answers	Percentages%
Very important.	11	22%
Important.	37	74%
Unimportant.	2	04%

Table 3: The Importance of Qualifiers in Argumentative Essays According to the Participants

❖ **Could you offer a brief explanation of that?**

The individuals who think that qualifiers are “very important” claim that they help produce coherent and cohesive essays. Those who argue that “they are important”, state that qualifiers allow the arguer to draw borders for his/her claim. The people who think that the use of qualifiers is “unimportant” declare that they can be misleading and thus better not to be used.

Question 11: How significant is rebuttal/ counter argument for argumentative essays?

All the participants think that rebuttal is “important”. Twenty-nine or (58%) claim that the presence of a counter argument is “important” when writing an argumentative essay. The remaining twenty-one or (41%) of them consider rebuttal as a “very important” part of an argument.

	Answers	Percentages %
Very important	21	41%
Important	29	58%

Table 4: The Significance of Rebuttal in Argumentative Essays According to Students

❖ **May you clarify why?**

The participants argue that rebuttal is mandatory because it does not only show one's consciousness about the presence of other points of view, but it also strengthens one's claim by emphasizing that one's stand has more potential than the counterargument.

Question 12: When you give counterarguments you?

As illustrated in the diagram, twenty-nine or (58%) of students use counterarguments in order to point out that there is another perspective that does not match theirs. Fourteen representing (28%) utilize it to disagree with it and provide evidence as to why the audience should do so. And six or (12%) of them employ it to highlight that their arguments might not be reliable in every situation.

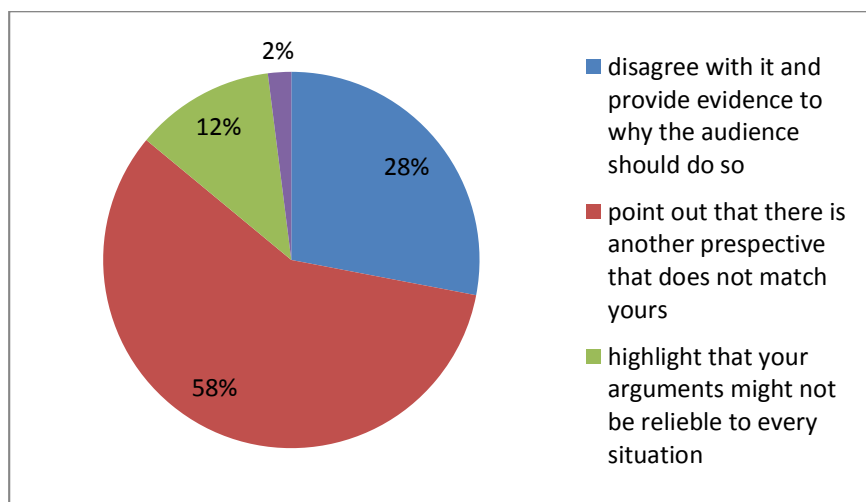


Diagram 8: Students' Use of Rebuttal

C. Section 03 Toulmin's Model of Argumentation

Question 13: Which of the following statement do you agree with?

Toulmin's Model of Argumentation:

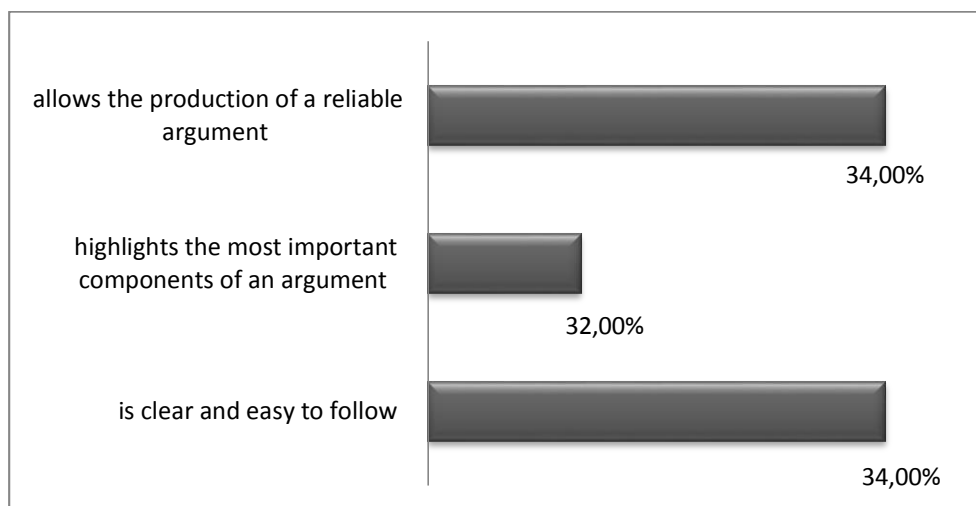


Diagram 9: Students' Attitudes towards TMA.

As could be observed from the graph, sixteen representing (32%), consider Toulmin's model as an overall framework that highlights the most important components of an argument. According to (34%) of the participants TMA allows the production of reliable arguments. The rest, (34%), find the model clear and easy to follow.

3.3 Presentation of the Pre-test and Post-test

This section deals with the argument analysis of the pretest taken by fifty (50) Third-Year students at the Department of English MMUTO. The essays have been analyzed relying on Toulmin's Model of Argumentation.

3.3.1 The Results of the Pre-test

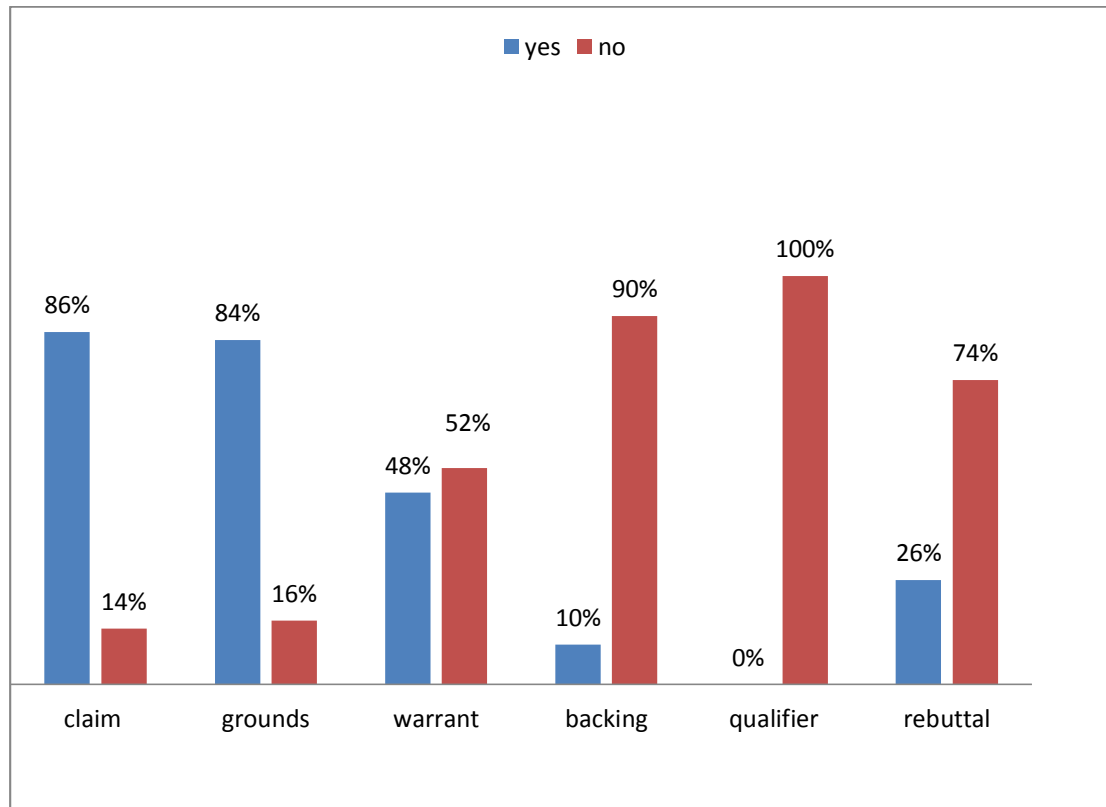


Diagram 10: Argument Analyses of Pre-test Essays

As could be seen above, most of the students, forty-three (43) representing (86%), include a claim in their essays, but seven (7) of them or (14%) do not. The grounds are also almost always included with forty-two (42) students who use them and only eight (8) (16%) not. The warrant however has almost the same percentage of inclusion. Twenty-six (26) participants, or (52%), do not include any warrant in their essays and twenty-four (24) of the students (48%) do incorporate a warrant. The majority (90%) or forty-five (45) essays do not have any backing whereas (10%) or five (5) essays do. None of the students include any qualifiers in their essays. Moreover, a total of only thirteen (13) students, which equals to (26%), used counterargument, and the remaining thirty-seven (37) or (74%) essays lack rebuttal.

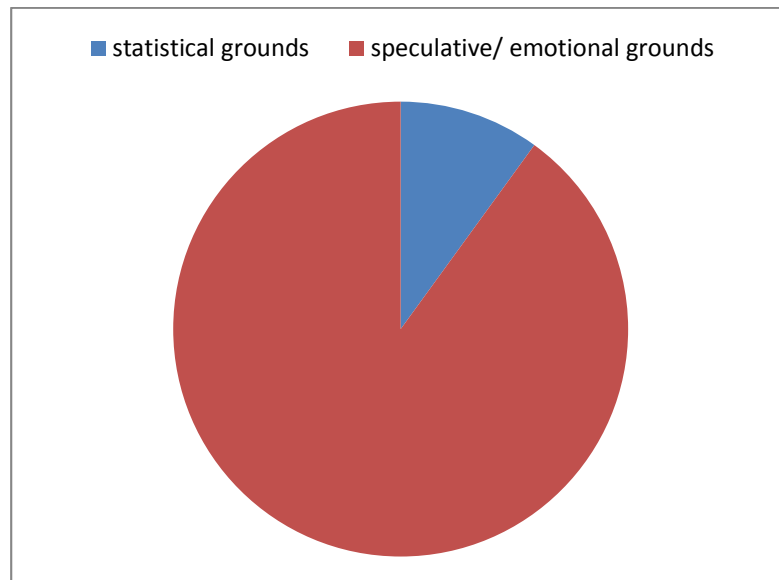


Diagram 11: Types of Students' Grounds

As Diagram 11 illustrates, only (10%) of the students use scientific data, the majority, however, rely on emotional grounds to support their claims.

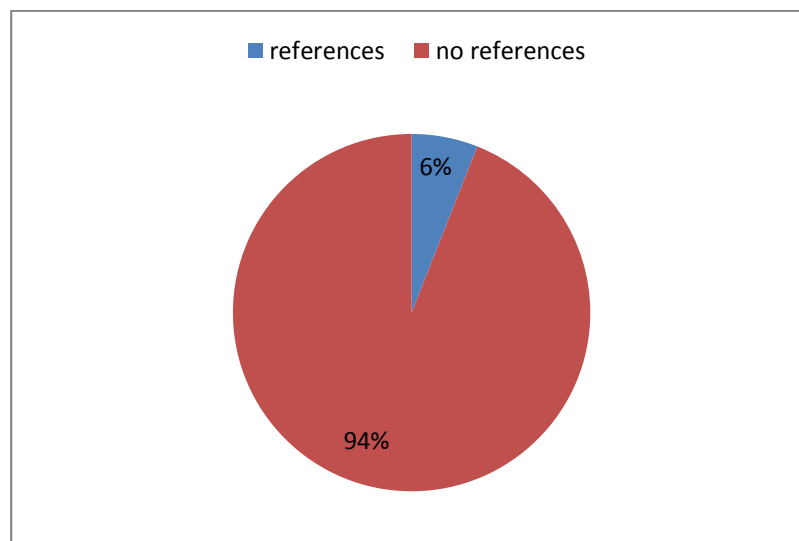


Diagram 12: Students' Sources Inclusion.

As could be seen in Diagram (11) only three essays (03) or (06%) have references. Ninety-four percent (94%) however, do not include any citations.

3.3.2 The Results of the Post-test

The following statistics are gathered from the argument analysis of forty (40) essays written by Third-Year students. Twenty (20) of these essays are produced by students who have not been exposed to Toulmin's Model of Argumentation and thus are the control group. The remaining twenty (20) essays are written by the experimental group who has been taught the already mentioned model.

3.3.2.1 Control Group Findings

The results of the argument analysis of the control group participants' show that eighteen students, or (90%), have included both a claim and grounds in their argumentative essays and only a total of (10%) did not. Twelve out of twenty participants, which represents (60%) used warrants, four of them, representing (20%), included backing, and none of them, however, used a qualifier. Only four of the students or (20%) of them, used counterarguments.

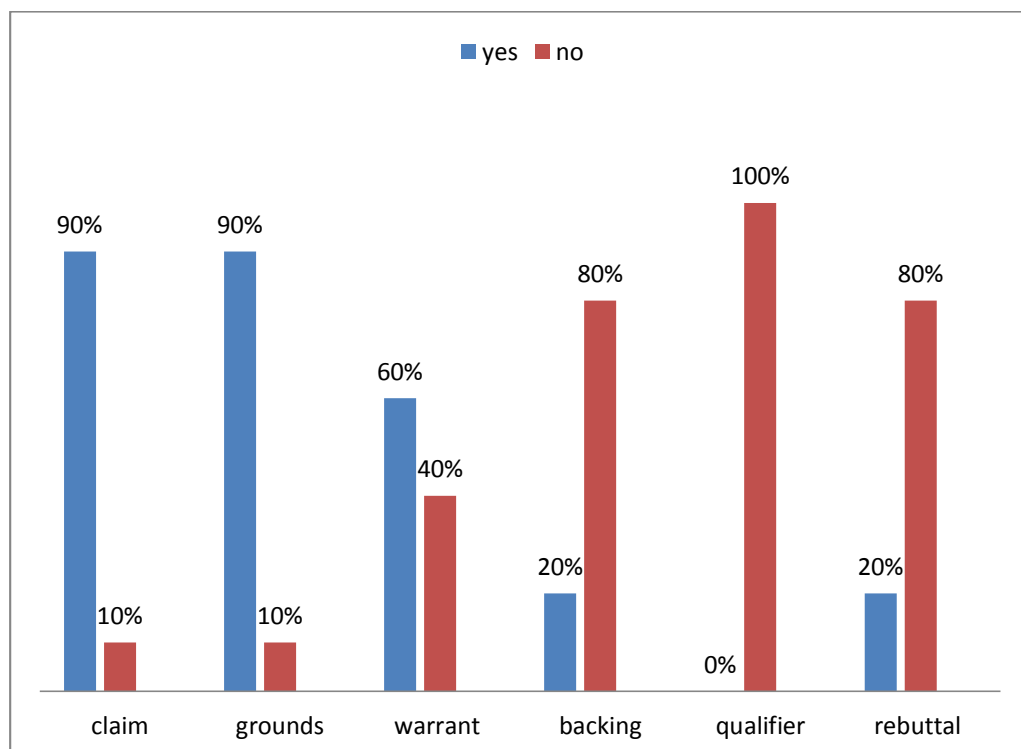


Diagram 13: Control Group Argument Analysis

3.3.2.2 Experimental Group Findings

From the following graph, one could notice that eighteen or (90%) of the participants have made a “claim” in their essays. Ten, representing (50%), of them have provided evidence. Only four, or (20%), relied on “warrants”, and only one or (5%) included “backing”. Nineteen representing (95%) of these participants have included a “rebuttal” in their essays.

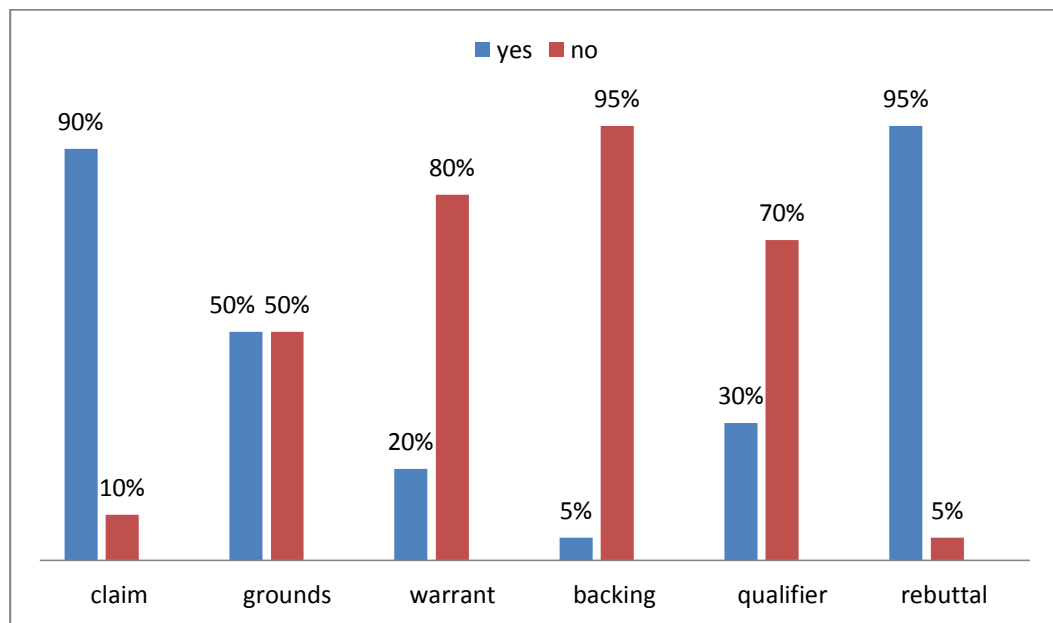


Diagram 14: Experimental Group Argument Analysis

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results obtained from the questionnaire answered by Fifty (50) Third-Year students, and from the structured interview conducted with three (03) of the Reading and Writing teachers in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. It also provided argument analysis of fifty (50) pre-test essays, and forty (40) post-test essays written by the participants. These findings will be discussed in detail in the following chapter by providing interpretation and explanation.

4 Chapter Four: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

The present chapter intended to discuss the results obtained from the interview conducted with three of the Reading and Writing module teachers at the department of English at MMUTO and the questionnaire administered to Third-Year students, along with the discussion of both the pre/ post tests taken by the participants. The results are discussed in relation to the literature and Toulmin's Model of Argumentation as a theory, as stated in chapter one. This analysis aims at answering the research questions and at confirming or disconfirming the advanced hypotheses of the General Introduction. This chapter is divided into two (02) main parts. The first part deals with the techniques and models used by teachers to teach argumentation and it is answered by the discussion of the teachers' interview. The second part aims at identifying the most common difficulties students encounter when producing their argumentative essays, and to disclose the impact of Toulmin's Pattern of Argumentation (TPA) on the argumentative writing skills of Third-Year students. Thus, it discusses the results obtained from both the questionnaire along with the pre and post-tests argument analyses.

4.1 Discussion of the Teachers' Interview

4.1.1 Argumentation in Academia

In the first question of the interview, all the teachers answered with a 'yes'; this suggests that all the participants assume that argumentation has a significant stature in both social and academic settings. This overall finding is in accordance with results reported by Richard Andrews (2010) who argues on how argumentation is important in society. He also emphasizes that the latter should be taught in higher education in order to permit students to

think rationally in their day-to-day lives. The results from the teachers' justification of their assertion demonstrated three main things. First, the participants think that argumentation permeates most, if not all, academic subjects. This implies that argumentation is not only a lecture, subject-specific, to be learned, but a skill that is required to complete many academic tasks which is in accordance with '*... Argument and argumentation are so deeply embedded in subjects and disciplines...*' (Andrews, 2010:01).

Second, the teachers claimed that argumentation plays a role in enhancing students' critical capacities. This insinuates that argumentation, according to the participants, is among the high-level thinking functions. In other words, arguments allow the students to approach matters from critical perspectives and operate on them by proposing divergent viewpoints and analyzing each critically to reach a suitable solution. Accordingly, TMA is considered as an alternative to increase the students' critical thinking in depth evaluation, since this model involves the high level of reasoning skills.

Finally, argumentation promotes persuasion therefore it is crucial. It is worth mentioning that persuasion and argumentation are not necessarily the same, but the teachers' claims could be translated to mean that argumentation is a tool to clarify or convince someone with an idea or even to alter someone else's beliefs or thoughts. As a consequence it is important in both educational and social situations. To sum up, these findings concluded that the teachers think that argumentation is crucial in academia, and universities and colleges are spaces in which argumentation should be encouraged and where it can flourish. (Andrews, 2010)

4.1.2 Argumentative writing Teaching Models and Techniques

The second question revealed that two divergent models and a few common techniques are employed by the teachers to teach argumentation. This could indicate that the teachers at

the Department of English MMUTO are free to choose, not only their methods of teaching but also, the theoretical frameworks they utilize in their lessons. One of the participants stated using the eclectic approach to tutor argumentative writing. This signifies that the teacher uses an approach in teaching a second or a foreign language that combines the principles of various methods and approaches of language teaching depending on the lesson objectives (Iscan, 2017). The teacher claimed to utilize this approach in its simplest manner by the use of terminology related to the structure of argumentative essays as well as its basic components such as sentence types, moves, and so on.

Some research found that there are a lot of advantages to using the above-stated approach; they show that it opens up a range of alternatives and embraces all four language skills. Few of the findings suggest that the eclectic approach is important because it gives teachers the freedom to opt for what is appropriate in their dynamic teaching contexts, Brown (2002). Moreover, it helps teachers to teach effectively by drawing on the strength of various methods and avoiding their weaknesses (Kumar, 2013). In this respect, TMA could be used simultaneously with the eclectic approach, in other words, teachers could teach their students only the three fundamental elements of the model: claim, warrant and backing.

Other research, however, explains that adapting the eclectic approach can be unsafe as a teacher may fall victim to the methodological baggage that comes with it (Weidemann, 2001). In other words: *'theoretical eclecticism is suspicious on logical and theoretical ground and without principles eclecticism is likely to fall into a state of arbitrariness.'* (Brown, 1994: 74). These studies signify that this approach if used correctly could benefit both the teacher and the students but if misused, it could lead to unpleasant conclusions.

The study showed that the two other teachers rely on the classical model to teach argumentative writing. This means that they make use of the Aristotelian argument. Both

teachers argued that this theory of argumentation draws a clear and simple outline that could facilitate their essays' structure and offer them a clear layout of its basic elements. This justification implies that the teachers focus more on the overall structure and parts of an argumentative essay, neglecting its deeper components such as the terminology related to it, its appropriate transition markers, and linking verbs... which is in opposition to Wingate's (2012) claims mentioned in chapter one. The two teachers also claimed to divide the essay into parts and teach each with its basic components. This suggests that teachers use the techniques mentioned by Shaha (2017) to teach argumentative writing.

4.1.3 Common Argumentative Writing Obstacles

In question three (03) the three teachers were asked to state the most common difficulties their students encounter when producing an argumentative essay. From their answers, three main obstacles could be highlighted. The initial difficulty, the teachers claimed, was organization. The majority of students, according to the interviewees, *'know roughly that essays are made up of three parts'*. However, most of them fail to conform to the structure of the respective parts. This denotes that students do not master the components suitable for each of these parts even though teachers claimed to teach each of the parts separately to facilitate the task.

The second difficulty was the students' inadequate mastery of discourse types needed in composition. They claimed that they confound between the types of texts they study and do not know how to write an essay they assert, one of them is quoted, *'I do not know how to write an argumentative essay especially if I do not have a claim, it becomes only a narration or exposition.'* This infers that students cannot distinguish between the different narrative, descriptive, and more particularly expository and argumentative writing, as the participants

specified. This could insinuate that the students lack discourse competence and thus lack the ability to understand and produce extended speech and written features specific to each type.

The third obstacle, the teachers claimed, was language mastery, which is said to be the most common. This is characterized, as seen from the answers of the interview, by run-on sentences which are incorrectly punctuated. Inadequate mastery of different sentence types, which often results in students confusing phrases and sentences. Improper choice of vocabulary which results in essays where '*meaning is blurred and difficult to grasp*', one of the teachers quoted. This indicates that students' linguistic competencies, especially grammar and vocabulary, are not sufficiently developed.

The stated difficulties have also been mentioned in the literature. Authors such as Hays, et al., (1988) state that composing argumentative texts presents specific difficulties for writers with respect to content, structure, textual organization as well as linguistic coding. This concludes that in writing argumentative essays, students face these types of challenges as are prevalent in other academic writing settings.

4.1.4 The Efficacy of the Models in Use and Teachers' Attitudes toward TMA

Nonetheless, when the interviewees were asked about the efficacy of the models they utilize to teach argumentation on their students' essay production, a shared point of view surfaced. The three teachers agreed that the models they use are adequate to result in well-built and clear arguments; however, their students do not attain satisfactory argumentative skills. This suggests that the theoretical frameworks are not what results in unsatisfactory argumentative writings. The three teachers claimed, and one of them quoted: '*it depends in the first place on the students' previous skills in writing*', the general lack of academic writing practice is directly related to the lack of progress in their students' argumentative writing

capacities and academic writing in general. This signifies, as one of the teachers specified: *‘as long as students do not practice outlining, drafting, composing, editing and improving overall clarity, coherence, persuasiveness, they will not make progress.’*

Consequently, for students to improve they first, at the level of the overall structural academic writing process use as Williams (2003) suggests outlines because they seem to work successfully when the writers apply them to develop ideas on the decided topics. Brookes and Marshall (2004) emphasize the importance of editing in academic writing; they define the latter as the process of changing something imperfect into perfect by wasting time on the draft. According to Ur (2003), most people progress through a number of untidy drafts before reaching a final version. Learners should, then, be encouraged by teachers to work through a number of revisions to accept messy drafts as a positive and essential stage in writing. Then, at the deeper meaning-related level, as noted in chapter one, many specialists such as Halliday and Hasan (1976), Taboada (2004), and Yule (2008) stress the importance of both cohesion and coherence in the production of satisfactory pieces of academic writing. They claim that both cohesion and coherence contribute to the maintenance of unity and meaning in any genre of academic writing.

Additionally, one of the teachers stressed how the lack of students’ motivation and enthusiasm could prevent their argumentative writing progress. This could mean that not every teacher considers motivation as a key factor in the students’ academic journey. The participant then suggested: *‘mechanisms to motivate students such as the regular publication of the best essays in the scientific journals or by presenting the merits of the best productions could constitute motivating factors’.*

In this respect, teachers could use TMA in a simplified manner to ensure the understanding of their students, and to allow them to become active and participate more in

order to make them motivated. According to Bakar (2014), motivation is a complex part of human psychology and behavior that influences how individuals choose to invest their time, how much energy they exert in any given task, and how they persist in the task. The author adds that motivation reflects students' choices of learning tasks, the time and effort they devote to them, their persistence in learning, and in coping with the obstacles they encounter. This infers that motivation is what drives students to develop positive attitudes towards writing in general and argumentation in particular; teachers must foster it to ensure their students' academic success.

The final question in the interview sought to uncover teachers' attitudes toward the possible effects of Toulmin's Model of Argumentation on students' argumentative performance. The responses from the interview showed that one teacher thought that: *'Toulmin's model of argumentation is of great importance in the students' academic career. I believe that using the model will yield positive results'*. This indicates that the participant has positive attitudes toward TMA and thinks it could ameliorate students' argumentative skills. In contrast, the two other participants found the model too elaborate to meet their students' needs, once again, maintained that theoretical frameworks are not of direct influence on students' competencies. This infers that first; TMA is more sophisticated for students to comprehend. Second, it means that models cannot improve students' overall competencies.

One of the teachers suggested that the correct use of teaching and learning approaches could play a key role in enhancing students' performances in general. The teacher specified that if schools and universities use Competency Based Language Teaching (CBLT) appropriately, noticeable changes in the academic settings will be seen. This means that universities, or the entire educational system, should adopt and use Competency Based Learning in its correct form to guarantee an advanced performance. This is possible because CBL measures learning rather than time. Students' progress by demonstrating their

competence to prove their knowledge and skills mastery required for a particular course. (O'sullivan and Bruce, 2014)

Many experts emphasize the advantages of CBLT. Nunan, for example, states that CBLT focuses: '*on language as a tool for communication rather than on language knowledge as an end in itself*' (2007:425). It promotes responsible and accountable teaching (Findley & Nathan, 1980). CBLT also enhances learners' confidence because they achieve competences required in the performance in real life. (Norton, 1987 as cited in Sullivan, 1995) According to Corcoran (1976, as cited in Stoffle and Pryor, 1980) CBLT establishes standards that must be defined and tested against reality, and increases the productivity of educational instructions. Last but not least, CBLT permits students to be active and aware of their learning. It also allows learners to practice and be involved in their language skills which promote the quality of their performance (Rodgers, 2001). This indicates that, indeed, CBLT could promote learners' overall language competency including their argumentative skills.

The discussed results of the interview answered the first question stated in the General Introduction. Teachers in the Department of English at MMUTO, use a few of the strategies mentioned in the review of the literature provided by Shaha (2017), and two of them rely on the classical model of argumentation. As such, the hypothesis that has been predicted in the introduction is not confirmed. This discussion also underlined a few important pieces of information. Among these was teachers' awareness of the fact that theoretical frameworks could not be a direct cause of better academic performance. In addition to that, changes in the teaching and learning processes are needed in order to boost students' overall capacities.

4.2 Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire and Pre-posttests

4.2.1 Discussion of Students' Questionnaire

4.2.1.1 Students' Argumentative Writing Difficulties

when asked about the importance of argumentation in both the social and educational contexts, more than half of the students who answered the questionnaire, precisely (55%) or twenty-seven (27) of them, (Diagram 01), agreed with the claim that argumentation is fundamental in both these contexts. This could signify that the participants have positive attitudes towards argumentation. Their justification was that argumentation is a tool to express one's thoughts and modify others' views in a calm, yet convincing manner, which is in accordance with what has been mentioned in chapter one. Twenty (20) of the participants representing (41%) strongly agreed with the above claim. This suggests that argumentation, according to the participants, is of critical importance. They explained that argumentation does not only help in expressing one's ideas but also in sharpening one's critical thinking and persuasion skills. Two (02), representing (04%), of the contributors, however, disagreed with the declaration maintaining that argumentation is nothing more than a lecture in a curriculum. The results imply that few students consider argumentation as only a lesson to learn in a specific domain of writing.

For the second question, students were asked about the complexities they encounter when writing argumentative essays. The results from the questionnaire, (check Table 01), showed that an equal percentage of (36%) or eighteen (18) students encounter evidential and vocabulary-related difficulties. This denotes that students, when composing their argumentative essays, have no evidence to support their claims. In this respect Knudson (1992:176) claims: *'a lack of background knowledge will result in students making unsupported claims that may or may not be logical'*. It also means that students lack

language mastery, that is, they cannot use the appropriate words in their most suitable contexts. Seven (07), which equals (14%), of the students have structural or organizational problems. This could be translated to Bean and Johnson (2007) claims on how students do not understand the mechanisms behind what they should include in each of the argumentative essay parts. TMA has, however, a clear outline of what should be included in all its six components. On the other hand, (10%) or five (05) of participants encounter grammatical-related difficulties.

In sum, these findings could connote that all the difficulties are related to a lack of linguistic competence, which is '*one's underlying knowledge system of a language its rules of grammar, its vocabulary, and all the pieces of language and how those fit together*'. (Brown, 2000:13)

4.2.1.2 Students' Argumentative Essays Elements

4.2.1.2.1 Claim and Grounds

In the third question, students were asked about the placement of their claim in an argumentative essay. The totality of the participants claimed to include a claim in their argumentative essays (as illustrated in Diagram 02). This indicates that students know that a claim is an indispensable element in an argumentative essay. The majority of the participants, thirty-nine (39), representing (78%), claimed to put their claim in the introduction. Eleven (11) or (22%) of them place their assertion in the body paragraphs. This could indicate that not all the students include a thesis statement in their introductory paragraph.

The present research also showed, in diagram 03, twenty-four (24) students representing (49%) sometimes state their claim explicitly. Twenty-two (22) of participants do state their claim overtly. The remaining three (3), which represent (6%), never openly state

their assertion. These results suggest that even though all the students claim to include an assertion many of them do not take a clear stance which appears to be inconsistent.

Some of the students who sometimes state their claim explicitly declared that it depends on the topic of their essay. In other words, they sometimes feel the need to take a stance on some topics but in others, they just weigh two different claims without leaning onto a particular one, which again is incoherent with the answers from the second question and is also refuted by Toulmin (2003) who confirms that one needs a claim to make an assertion. This indicates the reason behind the insufficient mastery of discourse types. Those who always openly state their claim highlighted that it is important to clearly state one's claim in order to give their essay more authority and clarity. This signifies that some of the students do understand what a claim is in an argumentative essay and how significant it is to encompass one in order to be able to compose a well-built argument.

In question five (05) the participants were asked whether they are keen to be factual or speculative in their arguments. The results show, as illustrated in Diagram (04), 40% or twenty (20) of the students remained neutral. The reason being is the variation of the topics they deal with. These students, similarly to the (18%), nine (09) of the participants who either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the claim that being factual is necessary to produce a good argument, claimed that in certain topics facts and scientific data are more appropriate to utilize, but in other cases being emotional is a better alternative. This shows that students know that factual argumentation is based on giving statistics, historical, or scientific backgrounds that, indeed, reinforce one's evidence; nevertheless, despite the fact that emotional arguers may seem to lack argumentation merit, emotional argumentation can be effective in certain situations (Walton, 2010; Macago & Walton, 2014). Sixteen (16) students representing (22%) of the sample are more devoted to factual evidence. This suggests that a

portion of the population believes that statistics, scientifically proven facts and theories embody more truthfulness and reliability.

When the participants were asked about their ways of referencing, which is: ‘...*the process of acknowledging the sources you have used in writing your essay... it allows the reader to access your source document ... in order to verify... the validity of your argument...*’ (Pears and Graham, 2010: 01), (20%) which equals to ten (10) and thirteen (13) participants or (26%) claimed to “often” and “always” mention their sources. To defend their claim they argued that referencing not only gives more validity and reliability but also helps them avoid plagiarism. This could indicate that some of the students master referencing and know exactly how and why it is used.

As for the thirteen (13) other students who “sometimes” cite the works they have used in their essays declared that, as mentioned above, their evidence is sometimes emotional so no sources could be stated. As illustrated in Diagram (05), (22%) or eleven (11) students rarely refer to any sources, and three (03) of them, (06%), never employ referencing. The justification given by these two portions are: first, time-related, some of these students claimed to have no time to mention others’ works. Second, few of them declared not paying attention to sources from where they have taken their information. This could generate few hypotheses. First, only a limited number of students recognize perfectly the importance of referencing. Second, as already cited in the previous answers, many students lack evidential support, which could be caused by the deficiency of students’ background knowledge as a result of, either their insufficient efforts to investigate the various domains of their studies or the complexity of the topics they deal with. And finally, it also could convey that many students do not understand how to reference, or how the latter could enhance their argumentative writing quality.

4.2.1.2.2 Warrants and Qualifiers

In addition to claims and grounds, warrants are the third fundamental element to produce a strong argument. The results from the questionnaire showed that only eight (08), (16%) of the participants, always use warrants in their argumentative essays. Almost half the participants, twenty-three (23), equaling (46%), of them, (check Diagram 06), often include assumptions in them. Twenty-six (26%) or thirteen (13) students only sometimes use warrants. while six (06) of them representing only (12%) either rarely or never include any warrants in their argumentative writing. This indicates that, even though the models used do not include warrants, students are familiar with the use of conventional assumptions to convince their readers, this, then, explains why a total of (76%) of the students answered with 'yes' warrants, since they are common beliefs, make claims more believable and reliable (see Table 02).

Additionally, as collected from the answers to the questionnaires, (see Table 03), only (04%) or two (02) participants think that qualifiers are unimportant because they could be misleading or make them appear unsure which was disconfirmed by Toulmin (as stated in Chapter One), thirty-seven (37) of them, representing (74%), suggested that model qualifiers are important, and eleven (11), equivalent to (22%), considered qualifiers as crucial. These findings were then further confirmed when the participants were asked about the frequency of their use of model qualifies. In view of that, some students could be familiar with TMA, since qualifiers are first introduced by Toulmin.

The data from the present study suggested that twenty (20) representing (40%) of the totality of students who have participated in it often include qualifiers in their argumentative essays (see Diagram 07). Fourteen (14) of them claim to sometimes use model qualifiers, which represents (28%), and (26%) or thirteen (13) students always encompass this element.

This suggests that students acknowledge the fact that their claims could not be generalized and modal qualifiers could give both their warrant and the claim more credibility by stating the fact that in certain situations one's assertion could not be valid.

4.2.1.2.3 Rebuttal/ Counterargument

In question eleven (11), the students were asked how important the insertion of a rebuttal/ counterargument in an argumentative essay is. The findings, in table 04, showed that while none of the participants find counterarguments “unimportant”, more than half the participants, twenty-nine (29) or (59%), view counterclaims as important in an argumentative essay. forty-one (41%), twenty-one (21), of them believe that rebuttal is very important. They justified their claim by stating that a rebuttal helps them demonstrate their awareness of the existence of a different point of view. Not only that but they also asserted that giving a counterargument could confirm the validity of their claim, which is in accordance with what has been found in the previous question. When asked about the reason they use rebuttal, in question twelve (12), twenty-nine (29) corresponding to (59%) of the students, claimed to use rebuttal to only admit the existence of a dissimilar viewpoint to theirs. Fourteen (14) or 29% of the students declared to use rebuttal as means to disagree with the opposing opinion by stating how their stance is valid and correct. As illustrated in diagram (08), only six (06) students, which equal to (12%), employ rebuttal to emphasize that their conclusion could not be applicable in every situation; this signifies that only a minority of the students use rebuttal in Toulmin's logic. He claims that: ‘... *rebuttal indicates the circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside.*’(2003:94)

4.2.1.3 Students' Views on Toulmin's Model of Argumentation

From the brief explanation that has been offered in the introduction of the questionnaire, the participants formed an opinion about Toulmin's method. Sixteen (16) students, equivalent to (32%), assumed that Toulmin's model of argumentation 'highlights the most important components of an argument'. Thirty-four (34%) of them suppose that TPA 'is clear and easy to follow'. While the same number of students, (34%), or seventeen (17) of them, assume that 'TPA aids the production of reliable arguments' (see Diagram 09). These findings denote that, not only, students have positive attitudes towards TMA, but also, they find this method clear enough to help them enhance their argumentative essay structure. Correspondingly, a number of experts have argued in favor of utilizing Toulmin's model of argumentation. Locker and Keene, for instance, as mentioned in chapter one, have found TPA both straightforward and easy to apply for students due to '*its simplicity, completeness, and heuristic power*'. (1983:103). In other words, Toulmin's model is simple because it breaks down an argument into six parts which according to Lindsey M. Ellis (2015) benefits both the teachers and the students to analyze and formulate valid arguments.

4.2.2 Discussion of the Pre and Post-tests

4.2.2.1 Pre-test Argument Analysis

The findings of the pretest have uncovered, as could be observed in Diagram 10, that while forty-four, representing (86%) of the essays, had an explicit claim, seven (07) or (14%) of the essays did not have one. This suggests that, first, not the totality of students include a claim in their argumentative essays, which indicates that these students do not produce an argument. Second, it shows that the students who encompass a claim almost always do it straightforwardly.

Claims, as some experts, such as Toulmin (2003) and Murray (2012) insist, are rather vacant without evidence to support them. In their essays, the majority of the participants (84%), or forty-three (43), among them had, indeed, supported their claim with, mostly, emotional grounds. As is illustrated in diagram (11), only a few of the copies have statistical data, in other words, no more than (10%) which represents five (05) of the essays contained pieces of evidence that are statistical. The remaining majority, (90%), or forty-five (45), compositions had solely either emotional or speculative grounds. This could be translated to the limited investigations students make on different, varied topics and their lack of investigating, reading and debating.

Surprisingly, although the participants agreed on ‘referencing is important’, only a slight minority of students had references in their writing. Diagram (12) shows that only three (03), representing (06%), of the participants, stated sources in their essays while almost the totality of the sample, (94%) or forty-seven (47), did not mention any. This suggests that even though learners, theoretically, recognize the significance of referencing, they, in practice, do not implement it.

The argument analysis done in this study showed that, whereas almost half the essays, twenty-four (24) representing (48%), encompassed a warrant more than half (52%), twenty-six (26), do not. Warrants, according to Toulmin (2003), however, necessitate another key element the author calls backing. Backing is ‘...*assurances, without which the warrants themselves would possess neither authority nor currency...*’ (2003: 96) In other words the power of a warrant is dependent on that of backing. From the analysis, nonetheless, only five (05) students representing (10%) utilized backing. (90%), which represents forty-five (45) students, did not employ this element. It is worth mentioning, then, that these findings signify that students are unfamiliar with both the concepts of warrants and backing because they are a part of a model they do not follow.

The data from the argument analysis resulted in a rather contradictory conclusion. None of the dissertations in the pretest had a model qualifier, even though the majority of the participants declared to ‘often’ or ‘sometimes’ rely on a qualifier to strengthen their claims. This could mean that students are not familiar with the use of model qualifiers in their argumentative essays and that they confused the model qualifier meant by Toulmin (2003) with the grammatical qualifiers used to attribute a quality to another word.

The last element in the analysis is rebuttal, which is directly linked with the previous element, while thirteen (13) representing (26%) of the dissertations included a counterargument, thirty-seven (37), equaling (74%), lack a rebuttal, despite the fact that none of the participants claimed that rebuttal is ‘unimportant’ in an argumentative essay. This conveys that most of the students think that argumentation is to always prove a point right. This analysis, in conclusion, suggests that, in their compositions, the students know what to include in their essays in theory, but are unable, and this could be due to the many reasons mentioned above, such as lack of linguistic and discourse competences, to apply it in their writing.

4.2.2.2 Discussion of the Post-test Argument Analysis

4.2.2.2.1 Discussion of the Control Group’s Argument Analysis

From the data represented in graph (13) one could conclude that the results of the argument analysis of the control group, which consists of twenty (20) essays, are approximately similar to the analysis of the pretest. As illustrated in the graph, (90%) of the dissertations, which in numbers equal to eighteen (18), included an assertion. And the same percentage, which equals (90%), or eighteen (18) copies, had evidence to support the stated claim.

One thing that differed in the analysis is the statistics found in warrant inclusion. While in the pretest the proportion of those who did not include a warrant in their essays, (52%) is slightly higher than those who did (48%), the post-test control group analysis has found that (60%) which is equivalent to twelve (12) dissertations did encompass a warrant, and only eight (08) essays, (40%), do not. Four (04) out of twenty participants from the control group have backed their warrants, whereas the majority, just as in the pretest, (80%), sixteen (16) of them have not utilized any backing even though Toulmin (2003) emphasized the importance of backing in his work.

As for the model qualifier the statistics remain unchanged, none (00%) of the control group members used a qualifier in their argumentative essay. Additionally, only four (04) students, representing (20%) of the totality, presented a counterargument in their pieces of writing, which denotes that (80%), or sixteen (16) students, papers lack a rebuttal. This suggests that students' patterns of argumentative writing did not change even after responding to the questionnaire.

4.2.2.2 Discussion of the Experimental Group's Argument Analysis

In the examination of the essays written by the experimental group, the participants who have been exposed to Toulmin's method, a remarkable change could be noticed in diagram (14) in relation to a few of Toulmin's argument elements. As illustrated in the graph, two (02) students did not include a claim. Surprisingly, the number of the participants who supported their claim had drastically descended to (50%) or half the contestants which represent only ten (10) of them. Out of these ten (10) students, only four (04) wrote an essay that includes a warrant.

Similarly to the grounds, the usage of backing decreased in the essays composed by the experimental group. As is highlighted in diagram (14), only one dissertation, representing

(05%) of the whole, incorporated some kind of support (backing) to the warrant, while almost the totality (95%) or nineteen (19) of them have not integrated any. It is worth noting, then, that the students did not completely understand the notions of TMA.

Contrary to the results of the pretest and those of the control group, the experimental group data showed a slight dissimilarity in the utilization of model qualifiers. Whereas in the former two analyses the use of qualifiers is inexistent, in the latter, six (06) representing (30%) of the participants used a model qualifier in their argumentative essays. Furthermore, the majority (95%) provided a counterargument; this means that only one (01) out of the twenty (20) members of the experimental group did not give a rebuttal. This suggests that students likely misunderstood TMA because most of them focused more on providing a counterclaim rather than supporting their stance.

Although the analyses of the post-test, specifically those of the experimental group, have been, not exclusively, different from those of the pretest, and according to teachers' feedback, the argumentative capacities of the students have not been visibly enhanced. To reformulate, according to the tutors, even though some of the experimental group participants respected the TPA, the structure, vocabulary, and overall lack of coherence in their essays lead to an unconvincing whole. This advocates that TMA did not contribute to enhancing students' argumentative writing capacities.

The findings of the questionnaire provided an answer to the second research question about the difficulties students encounter while writing an argumentative essay. According to the participant's answers, the most prominent difficulties are evidential, vocabulary, and structural-related difficulties, which confirmed the second hypothesis in chapter one, and which was in alignment with what has been mentioned in the literature. The results from the experiment offered a response to the third research issue about whether Toulmin's model of

argumentation could enhance students' argumentative capacities. From the findings of the pretest and posttest argument analysis, it has been concluded, in contrast to the given hypothesis, that Toulmin's method did not improve the argumentative abilities of the participants. The present findings concluded that, indeed, a theoretical framework does not have a direct influence on the argumentative skills of students. It also uncovered that reading, practicing academic writing, (drafting, editing, composing...), and learning about its basic elements such as coherence and cohesion, might improve students' argumentative abilities.

Conclusion

The discussion of the results obtained from the two research techniques, and the argument analysis, allowed three research questions to be answered and to confirm one of the suggested hypotheses, but disconfirm the two others. The results revealed that not all the teachers at the department of English at MMUTO utilize the classical model of argumentation in their classes to teach argumentative writing. The results showed that the eclectic approach is also employed for this purpose. The results also revealed that there are numerous difficulties students encounter when producing an argumentative essay. And from the data, structural and language-related (vocabulary and grammar) obstacles are among the most prominent ones. Finally, the results of the current research concluded that, contrary to the proposed hypothesis, TMA did not enhance students' argumentative capacities nor did it allow them to produce adequate argumentative essays.

General Conclusion

The current dissertation has explored the ‘Impact of Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation on the argumentative skills of third-year students at the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou’. This investigation has sought to attain three main objectives. The first is to uncover the models and techniques used to teach academic argumentative writing. The second is to identify the most common difficulties students stumble upon during their argumentative essays’ production. The third aim is to investigate whether Toulmin’s model of argumentation TMA would enhance students’ argumentation capacities or not. To fulfill these objectives, Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation has been relied on as a theoretical framework. The latter is a method developed by Stephen Toulmin in 1958 for both producing and analyzing arguments by breaking them into six distinct elements. TMA suggests that an argument is a complex whole that is produced by a mixture of smaller elements. According to Toulmin, for an argument to be valid, it has to have six elements, three of which are fundamental: claim, data, and warrant. Along with three that are not as primary but are necessary for the validity of the argument: backing, qualifier, and rebuttal.

In order to conduct the study, an experimental research has been carried out utilizing the pre/post-tests method. Additionally, a mixed method research that combines both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and data analysis has been opted for. Two main instruments are involved in the study. An online questionnaire is administered to fifty (50) Third-Year (L3) students, and a structured interview conducted face-to-face with three (03) teachers of the reading and writing module. Additionally, an argument analysis of fifty (50) pre-test essays, and forty (40) post-test essays have been made. The students are selected on the basis of random sampling. For data analysis, the computer program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to analyze the statistical data gathered from the

closed-ended questions of the questionnaire, and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is applied to interpret the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions of the structured interview and the questionnaire. And TMA was used for the argument analysis of the ninety (90) pre/post-tests essays.

The discussion of the results of the interview has revealed that all the teachers involved in the study agree on the importance of argumentation in education. They claim that it has so many benefits in their students' academic journey and their social lives as well. It has also determined that these teachers use very simple techniques such as dividing the essay into parts and each part into its main components to teach their students how to write an argumentative essay. These teachers rely on two different models: the Aristotelian method and the eclectic approach. Moreover, the discussion has revealed that teachers believe that theoretical frameworks have little to no influence on students' capacities. They argued that practice, motivation, and the correct use of the teaching and learning approaches might influence outcomes, and enhance the capacity of the learners in not only argumentative academic writing but in every other academic aspect.

To find out the difficulties students are most likely to encounter when writing an argumentative essay, a questionnaire was distributed to fifty (50) third-year students. The discussion of this questionnaire has unearthed three main obstacles encountered by the participants. Some participants claim to have a difficulty in finding evidence to use as grounds and thus evidential obstacles are the first limitation for them, followed by vocabulary-related difficulties. In other words, a number of students have a problem choosing the appropriate vocabulary to use in a specific context or to convey a particular message. Finally, responders claim that the organization/structure of an argumentative essay is a complexity they encounter when writing one.

To dive deeper, an experiment has been conducted to reveal the impact of TMA on the argumentative skills of Third-Year students. The discussion of the arguments analyses of the pre-test have revealed that most essays that have been written by the participants encompass only the three fundamental elements in Toulmin's argument, and according to the teachers' feedback, are not satisfactory. What was unpredictable in the results discussed in the arguments analyses of the post-test is the fact that even though many students respected Toulmin's Model of Argumentation and successfully included the totality of its six elements, and again according to the teachers' expertise, the end result was not satisfactory neither.

To conclude, the study has provided answers to the three research questions and has confirmed one, and disconfirmed two suggested hypotheses of the General Introduction. It has shown that Third-Year students face evidential, organizational, and vocabulary-related difficulties when arguing. Furthermore, two models, the classical and eclectic approaches, are employed in teaching argumentative academic writing at the department of English MMUTO. However, neither of these models nor an alternative one, TMA has helped the students to attain acceptable or satisfactory argumentative capacities to produce adequate essays.

There have been limitations faced while conducting this research which were the limited number of respondents to the questionnaire and the lack of willing to participate in the experiment. Regarding further investigation, we suggest students' attitudes on the use of the eclectic approach. I also suggest the influence of practising outlining, drafting, and editing on students' academic writing skills.

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