



## A Primer on Authorial Voice-Promoting Pedagogy in an Academic Argumentative EFL Context: An Innovative Mixed-Methods Research Approach

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Authorial voice is a remarkably slippery construct in second language (L2) argumentative writing. Given its fluid and dynamic nature, Zhao (2013) projects a framework which evokes different dimensions that writers should navigate in their L2 argumentative writing performance. However, such framework has not been empirically considered as a pedagogical one. As such, this study, adhering to Zhao's (2013) rubric and Riazi's (2016) innovative mixed-methods research, quantitatively examined the effect of teaching authorial voice on 27 MA students' voice development and argumentative writing quality. Then, qualitatively, the study traced the learners' conceptions of and potential challenges in constructing their authorial voice in their argumentative writing through stimulated recall interviews. The integrative results reveal that voice-promoting pedagogy was influential in promoting students' voice repertoire and argumentative writing quality. Although the quantitative results revealed that the three authorial voice dimensions (i.e., the presence and clarity of ideas in content, the manner of presentation, and the writer and reader presence) were almost equally affected by the treatment, the qualitative findings showed the centrality of reader-and-writer engagement in constructing good enough voice in L2 argumentative writing performance. The pedagogical and methodological implications for L2 writing instruction and argumentative writing are also discussed.

در نظر گرفته شده است. با توجه به ماهیت (L2) صدای نویسنده سازی ای بسیار پیچیده در نوشتار استدلالی زبان دوم سیال و پویا این سازه، ژائو (2013) چارچوبی را ارائه می کند که ابعاد مختلفی را در بر می گیرد که نویسندگان باید در عملکرد نوشتاری استدلالی خود به آن بپردازند. با این حال، چنین چارچوبی از نظر تجربی به عنوان یک چارچوب آموزشی مورد بررسی قرار نگرفته است. به این ترتیب، این مطالعه، با پایبندی به چارچوب ژائو (2013) (و تحقیق ترکیبی نوآورانه ریاضی) (2016)، به طور کمی تأثیر آموزش صدای نویسنده را بر رشد صدای نویسنده 27 دانشجوی کارشناسی ارشد و کیفیت نوشتار استدلالی آنها بررسی کرد. سپس، به لحاظ کیفی، این مطالعه مفاهیم و چالش های بالقوه یادگیرندگان را در ساخت صدای نویسنده در نوشتار استدلالی خود از طریق مصاحبه های عمیق کرد. نتایج یکپارچه نشان می دهد که آموزش ترویج صدای نویسنده در ارتقای صدای نویسنده دانشجویان و کیفیت نوشتار استدلالی تأثیرگذار بوده است. اگرچه نتایج کمی نشان داد که سه بعد صدای نویسنده (یعنی حضور و وضوح ایده ها در محتوا، نحوه ارائه و حضور نویسنده و خواننده (تقریباً به یک اندازه تحت تأثیر قرار می گیرند، یافته های کیفی بعد حضور نویسنده و خواننده و نوشتن استدلالی نیز مورد بحث قرار L2 را بیشتر نشان می دهد. مفاهیم آموزشی و روش شناختی برای آموزش نوشتن می گیرد.



**Keywords: L2 authorial voice; argumentative writing; MA students; innovative mixed-methods research**

## **Introduction**

Argumentative writing skills and its strands have gained considerable momentum in second language writing instruction and assessment (Qin & Karabacak 2010; Rufsandi, 2015; Stapleton & Wu, 2015). As van Eemeren et al. (1996) puts it, argumentation skill is characterized as a social and verbal “activity of reason aimed at increasing or decreasing the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or reader by putting forward a constellation of propositions intended to justify (or refute) the standpoint before a rational judge” (p.5). Adhering to this triple conceptualization of argumentation skill (i.e., verbal, social, and rational), and considering the projection of argumentative competence (Rapanta, Garcia-Mila, & Gilabert, 2013), researchers highlight the contributory role reasoning and persuasion have played in shaping and constructing solid argumentative repertoire. As Voss and Van Dyke (2001) rightly put it, persuasion, which is highly contingent on logic, is one of the primary goals of arguers in shaping sound argumentation.

Concomitantly, such argumentative writing skills and competence are more demanding in high-stake contexts such as IELTS, TOEFL, GRE (Atkinson & Geiser, 2009; Manzi, Flotts, & Preiss, 2012; Stemler, 2012). Argumentative writing skills are also highly emphasized in second language academia “given the recent surge of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners applying for graduate studies in English-medium universities” (Abdollahzadeh, Amini Farsani, & Beikmohammadi, 2017, p. 642). As Graff and Birkenstein (2010) asserted, writing well means “entering into conversation with others” and, more specifically, academic writing “calls upon writers not simply to express their own ideas, but to do so as a response to what others have said” (p. xiii). Such bilateral conceptualization reflects the persuasive nature of academic writing because academic text producers need to situate themselves into what Hoey (1983) has referred to as the community of others. Within this community-of-others’ arena, the voice of authors can be heard.

Scientifically speaking, such authorial voice initiation has a strong potential to promote students’ L2 argumentative writing repertoire and skills in different contexts and pave the way for mutual conversation between writers and readers. As such, L2 writing scholars have been striving for conceptualizing and operationalizing the construct of L2 authorial voice. Zhao (2013) projects a three-pronged conceptualization of L2 authorial voice that plays a considerable role in an argumentative writing instruction and assessment. These authorial voice dimensions consist of (a) presence and clarity of ideas in the content, (b) the manner of idea presentation, and (c) writer and reader presence. Adopting such a guiding framework, as Zhao (2013) argues, “writing instructors could better help their students, especially L2 students, to write with a strong authorial voice and use that voice appropriately and effectively in their writing” (p.220). Hence, students’ argumentative performance not only shape but is also shaped by learn-to-voice mindsets, which can be an incentive for promoting students’ awareness of argumentation skills in L2 writing through L2 authorial voice pedagogy (see Zhao, 2013).

## **Authorial Voice in L2 Argumentative Writing Contexts**

Different empirical studies have employed various guiding frameworks to measure voice (e.g., Keivanpanah & Khakbaz, 2020; Zare-ee, Hematiyan, & Askari, 2014). These studies reveal that authorial voice can play a considerable role in many aspects of L2 writing and assessment. Such diversity of definitions, conceptualizations, and perspectives may impede researchers to provide a sound and unified operational definition of the term in experimental and observational studies (Zhao, 2014). This perspective towards authorial voice reflects the multidimensional and complex nature of the authorial voice in L2 writing contexts (see Fogal, 2019). However, very few empirical studies reflect such complexity in L2 writing and assessment.

The reported studies on voice can roughly fall in two strands. The first set of studies used Zhao's (2013) model of authorial voice to explore an observational nature of voice and its correlation with other variables (Mitchell, 2017; Yoon, 2017; Zabihi & Bayan, 2020; Zabihi, Mehrani-Rad & Khodi, 2019; Zhao, 2017, 2019). For example, Zabihi et al., (2019) examined 129 upper-intermediate L2 learners' writing tasks using Zhao's (2013) analytic voice rubric and found out that L2 proficient learners were more successful and capable in creating voice in their writing than their other counterparts (i.e., low-proficient learners). However, given the multidimensionality of voice (Fogal, 2019), pure quantitative studies of its nature might not capture a comprehensive perspective towards the different dimensions of authorial voice. The second group of studies, which is the focus of the present study, has focused on the teachability of authorial voice in L2 writing contexts (Fogal, 2019). Such pedagogical strand of authorial voice has emphasized on how writing programs and instructors could better "assist L2 student writers to develop an appropriate and strong textual voice" (Zhao, 2013, p.203).

Employing Zhao's (2013) analytical voice rubric, Fogal (2019) explored the effect of a three-week writing course intervention on authorial voice construction for seven university students studying argumentative writing through a microgenetic approach. The findings showed the effectiveness of such interventions in promoting Japanese EFL learners' understanding of authorial voice. It should be noted that Fogal (2019) explored only one dimension of authorial voice, i.e., the writer-based authorial dimension. Such dimension highlights the writer's presence, opinions, and stance through the use of metadiscourse features such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and authorial self-mention, leaving other dimensions of authorial voice unaccounted for.

What stills largely remains underrepresented in L2 writing literature is the teachability of authorial voice in L2 argumentative writing. As such, the literature highlights two different perspectives. Given the fuzzy nature of authorial voice, some scholars argued that it is unlikely to teach and learn voice in L2 writing classes (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996). On the other hand, other researchers asserted that L2 writers, notably those from non-Western culture, can construct and shape strong personal voice through a proper pedagogy (Matsuda, 2001; Zhao & Llosa, 2008). As Zhao and Llosa (2008) put it, "awareness of voice in an argumentative essay can have a positive effect on quality of writing" (p.3). Likewise, voice instruction is "a worthy pedagogical focus in L2 writing classrooms" (Zhao, 2014, p. 219). Furthermore, given the sociocognitive nature of argumentation as a higher-order learning skill (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978), it seems that raising L2 students' awareness of the authorial voice might help them shape their argumentative repertoires, develop persuasive skills, and ultimately argumentative competence (Nussbaum & Sinatra, 2003; Zhao, 2014).

In EFL settings, the concept of voice is still yet to be recognized as an instructional and assessment kit in various L2 writing classrooms. Accordingly, the argument made here in this study, which is in line with Zhao's teachability projection, is if L2 writing instructors aim to tackle argumentative writing challenges of L2 writers and enhance their argumentative repertoire along with their persuasive skills, they need to start with some pedagogical interventions. Implementing a viable and explicit voice-promoting pedagogy can play a fundamental role in promoting L2 learners' argumentative writing development.

This pedagogical intervention study investigates the notion of authorial voice from the perspective of innovative mixed-methods research in which different layers of authorial voice can be examined holistically (Riazi, 2016). Such innovative mixed-methods research embed different dimensions of the research problem (here the authorial voice) as "they pertain to an integrated whole" (Riazi, 2016, p. 38). More importantly, the use of innovative mixed-methods research is warranted given the complex nature of authorial voice, its probable alignment with a complex dynamic systems theory (Fogal, 2019), and therefore its commensurability with a mixed-methods research approach (Kallemeyn, Hall, & Gates, 2020). As Fogal (2020) cogently puts it, to capture the variability and dynamicity of authorial voice in L2 writing, "future research might pair such studies alongside qualitative data to investigate control parameters that engender development" (p. 597).

Accordingly, employing Zhao's rubric and Riazi's innovative mixed-methods research, this study quantitatively examined the effect of teaching authorial voice on MA students' voice development and

argumentative writing quality. Then, qualitatively, the study traced students' performance on authorial voice through stimulated recall protocols with respondents in order to explore the learners' conceptions and understanding, and potential challenges in constructing their authorial voice in their L2 writing. The following research questions are addressed:

1. What effect does voice instruction have on writers' performance on authorial voice dimensions? (Quantitative)
2. Which authorial voice dimensions is more affected by instruction? (Quantitative)
3. How and to what extent does teaching authorial voice affect quality of L2 argumentative writing? (Quantitative)
4. How do MA students conceive of authorial voice instruction in their writing performance? (Qualitative)

Also, the following hypotheses were created:

1. Voice instruction has no effect on authorial voice dimensions.
2. Authorial voice dimensions are equally affected by voice instruction
3. Voice instruction has no effect on quality of L2 argumentative writing.

## Methods

### Mixed-Methods Design

The use of innovative mixed-methods research design is warranted here given the multidimensional and complex nature of authorial voice in L2 argumentative writing (Fogal, 2019; Zhao, 2014). Innovative mixed-methods research (IMMR) design enjoys not only the technicalities of MMR in terms of purpose and design, but is also "able to show how this mixture of the methods is done genuinely and in response to the need of interweaving the different types of knowledge related to different aspects or dimensions of the research problem" (Riazi, 2016, p. 36). As such, this study followed an innovative mixed-methods experimental research design to attend to different aspects of authorial voice (i.e., students' progress, conceptions, experience, and challenges) and depict its integrated domain. It is argued that the pluralistic function of innovative MMR design is a good fit given the multidimensional and complex nature of authorial voice, thus enables us to examine authorial voice from different perspectives which might not be wholly possible with exclusively quantitative or qualitative research design.

In the quantitative phase of the study, given the practical and logistic constraints in setting a control/comparison group, one group pretest-posttest design was employed to examine the effect of explicit voice-promoting pedagogy on MA students' improvement and their quality of argumentative writing in an EFL academic setting. This design, as Burns (2010) puts it, is roughly similar to action research in which a teacher-researcher tries to enhance student learning by doing tasks assumed to help address a language problem. In order to mitigate the effect of probable confounding variables, multiple pretests (i.e., two argumentative writing tasks) and multiple posttests (two writing performance assessments) were given. Such quasi-experimental design is used in "intact classes in which participants are periodically measured on a dependent variable multiple times before and after an experimental treatment is introduced" (Phakiti, 2014, p.349).

Qualitative data were further embedded within the experimental design (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2018). We embedded a qualitative phase through interview sessions with all students before treatment to trace students' understanding of voice and argumentative writing. The qualitative phase was embedded in this experimental

study before (through focus group interviews) and (immediately) after treatment (through stimulated recall protocols) for the purpose of triangulation and complementarity (Riazi & Candlin, 2014).

## Sampling Design

27 Iranian MA students of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) participated in this study. During their MA studies, these students were taking different modules on learning and teaching of English. At the time of the study, they were taking a mandatory advanced academic writing course in one of the leading universities. All the volunteering participants were highly competent in English as they had all passed the national matriculation exam which is highly competitive one for entering university. More specifically, the purpose of taking an obligatory ‘Advanced Academic Writing’ course is not only help students “develop academically sound texts” but it also inspires them to position their arguments and “evaluate the current literature in their assignments and engage with their audience” (Abdollahzadeh et al., 2017, p.648). This academic writing module focused on explicit instruction of argumentative writing in general and L2 authorial voice pedagogy in particular. For the purpose of this study, the instructor first concentrated on L2 authorial voice pedagogy for four weeks (2 sessions per week) and then L2 argumentative pedagogy to counterbalance and avoid the probable effect of argumentative writing pedagogy<sup>1</sup> on students’ authorial voice and vice versa. 10 MA students, who had already given their assent to cooperation, were randomly selected for the qualitative phase. This sample size was satisfactory to provide data saturation (Creswell, 2002; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Besides getting institutional approval from the institution<sup>2</sup>, we also disseminated a formal consent letter with the respondents and they could withdraw from any quantitative and qualitative phases of the study anytime without notice.

## Procedure

This study followed a mixed methods experimental design to depict a comprehensive picture of L2 authorial voice. During the usual course of academic writing’, the instructor set 8 sessions (two session per week for 30-45 minutes) over four weeks. At the beginning of the study (the first two sessions), MA students took two argumentative writing pretests (task 1 and task 2). Then, before embarking on the treatment, the instructor ran 6 focus group interview sessions with the respondents to examine their potential understanding of L2 authorial voice in L2 (English) writing. It should be noted that they were not aware of authorial voice and voice-related features used in L2 writing. Three of them had heard of voice but were not sure of its usage. Having completed the qualitative phase, the instructor began the treatment sessions. During the treatment, the instructor concentrated on Zhao’s (2013) rubric with three interrelated components: (a) presence and clarity of ideas in content, (b) manner of idea presentation, and (c) writer and reader presence. In the first two sessions, learners were instructed on how to present the idea smoothly. Throughout these sessions, the instructor concentrated on developing the writer’s unique point of view and its commitment to a topic while developing a central idea by examining different instances of argumentative texts. Then, for three sessions, the instructor raised students’ awareness of the manner of idea presentation by concentrating on manifestations of voice, e.g., using ‘hedging’, ‘boosters’, ‘attitude markers’, etc. ‘Writer and reader presence’ was also elaborated in the last sessions. In the experimental phase, the instructor employed the rubric as a tool to teach authorial voice. The use of such rubric is warranted as it can facilitate learning and teaching mechanism in different contexts (Reddy & Andrade, 2010) and can affect the pedagogical workflow (O’Brien, Franks, & Stowe, 2008). Different writing samples were

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that teaching argumentative writing is not the focus of the study and thus not reported in the manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> The ethical approval with No. 34/5674 was issued by Department of Foreign Languages at Iran University of Science and Technology.

analyzed by the instructor along with Zhao's (2013) rubric. After the experimental treatment, participants took two posttests, which measured their argumentative writing quality and authorial voice performance.

In order to objectively select the topics, we adhered to the sampling framework developed by Abdollahzadeh et al. (2017). They referred to the online repository database named "Opposing Viewpoint Resource Center" disseminated by Thomson Higher Education (<http://gale.cengage.com/Opposing Viewpoints>). Adhering to such sampling structure, eleven argumentative topics were selected. Then, three experienced writing instructors were called on to opt out four topics based on students' familiarity and the academic context of the study. The selected argumentative topics were: '*Do career women make bad wives or not?*', '*Does the internet connect people or isolate them?*', '*Privatizing education would be beneficial or harmful?*', and '*Single-sex universities can/cannot improve education?*'.

To analyze the argumentative essays quantitatively, two rubrics were employed. The first rubric, an authorial voice rubric for argumentative writing developed by Zhao's (2013), contains three main authorial voice elements, including presence and clarity of ideas in the content, manner of idea presentation, and writer and reader presence. To examine the holistic voice strength of the argumentative essays, Yoon's (2017) holistic voice rubric was used (see Appendix A). The holistic rubric contains all descriptors of the three dimensions of Zhao's (2013) analytical rubric (i.e., ideational, affective, and presence dimensions). The two coders assigned an individual voice strength score of 1 (i.e., lack of authorial voice) to 5 (i.e., strong authorial voice) to each argumentative essay in "balanced consideration of the three dimensions" (Yoon, 2017, p. 76).

The second rubric, an integrative analytic rubric for argumentative writing developed by Stapleton and Wu (2015), contains both the components/structure and the quality/substance of written arguments (see Appendix B). According to Stapleton and Wu (2015), "for an argumentative essay to be persuasive, not only must it follow surface structure by including alternative viewpoints and showing their weaknesses, but it must also support claims with good quality reasons that convince others" (p. 22). This rubric structurally contains descriptors of the surface structure (i.e., claim, counterclaim, and rebuttals and their associated supporting data) and the quality of supporting reasons reflecting the magnitude of argumentative soundness. To analyze the surface structure, descriptors of arguments were identified and their frequencies were calculated. Regarding the quality of data, the six components of written arguments are weighted ranging from a scale of 0 to 5 for claim and a scale of 0 to 10 for counter-argument claim and rebuttal claim along with a scale of 0, 10, 15, and 25, for the data (i.e., reasons for supporting the claims). Given that categories of data demand higher argumentation skills and persuasiveness, increased scores were assigned to them (Stapleton & Wu, 2015).

In order to check the reliability of the argumentative essays scores in terms of authorial voice and quality of argumentation, authors considered two rounds of coding. Within the first round, we held three training sessions (each for three hours) to explicate the scope of authorial voice, the rubric components, and the coding procedure. Two authors independently coded 50% of the argumentative essays. Having addressed any discrepancies, they then rated all the argumentative essays independently (second round). The percentage agreement between the coders (two authors of the article) was 0.85. Whenever there were inconclusive issues, the coders met to address and negotiate the issues to reach agreed-upon decisions.

In addition to the quantitative data analysis, qualitative data sources such as stimulated recall interviews were also conducted. Stimulated recall interviews, as introspective verbal reports (Bowles, 2018), cast light on the respondents' cognitive writing process. The introspective data gleaned from a stimulated recall interview "can only help researchers to gain a more nuanced view of language acquisition" (Bowles, 2018, p.347). As such, immediately after the posttests, the first author carried out retrospective interviews with the selected students to probe into writers' cognitive process while writing argumentative essays. The 10 selected students were then asked to elaborate on creating voice in their argumentative writing performance. A sample argumentative task (i.e., a stimulus) of their own writing was used as a prompt for eliciting participants' thoughts and decisions during that task.

In order to analyze the research questions, a series of repeated measures ANOVA and a simple effect analysis was employed. A repeated measures ANOVA was run to compare the means on the three gained scores to probe which authorial voice dimension was affected more by the instruction. The gain scores for the three dimensions were computed by subtracting posttest scores from pretests. A simple effect analysis was also run to examine any significant differences between levels of authorial voice. In order to investigate the third research question on the effectiveness of teaching authorial voice on argumentative writing quality performance, paired samples *t*-test was used. For the qualitative data analysis, stimulated recall protocols were analyzed to extract emerging themes.

## Results

### Quantitative Phase

As for the first research question, a repeated measures ANOVA and simple effect analysis were run to explore performance improvement on each voice dimension from pretest to posttest. Normality of the data is the main assumption of these statistical techniques. The assumption of normality was retained given that the computed ratios were lower than +/- 1.96 (i.e., *z*-score = .05 levels) (see Field 2018). Since the present study included a single group, the assumptions of homogeneity of covariance matrix of groups, and of homogeneity of variances of groups were not produced. Repeated measures ANOVA also assumes homogeneity of the variances of the differences between any two dependent variables. This assumption is tested through Mauchly’s sphericity test whose results can be ignored if one reports the results of the multivariate tests.

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the overall means for performances on dimensions of voice across pretest and posttest. The overall mean on the posttest (*M* = 66.79, *SE* = 3.26) was higher than that on the pretest (*M* = 41.09, *SE* = 3.71).<sup>3</sup>

TABLE 1  
*Descriptive Statistics: Overall Means by Time*

Time	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pretest	41.090	3.715	33.438	48.741
Posttest	66.795	3.263	60.074	73.516

As shown in Table 2, the results indicate that there was a significant difference between overall means on pretest and posttest of three voice dimensions ( $F(1, 25) = 47.95, p < .05, \eta^2 = .657$  representing a large effect size).

<sup>3</sup> The overall means of pretest is 41.09 and post-test 66.79, which is much higher than Zhao’s scale (15 points with 5 points on each dimension). In the study, we multiplied each score by five (see Field 2018).

TABLE 2  
Multivariate Tests: Pretest and Posttest Performances on Voice Dimensions

	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared*
Time	Pillai's Trace	.657	47.95	1	25	.000	.657
	Wilks' Lambda	.343	47.95	1	25	.000	.657
	Hotelling's Trace	1.918	47.95	1	25	.000	.657
	Roy's Largest R	1.918	47.95	1	25	.000	.657
Dimension	Pillai's Trace	.193	2.870	2	24	.076	.193
	Wilks' Lambda	.807	2.870	2	24	.076	.193
	Hotelling's Trace	.239	2.870	2	24	.076	.193
	Roy's Largest R	.239	2.870	2	24	.076	.193
Time*	Pillai's Trace	.054	.686	2	24	.513	.054
	Wilks' Lambda	.946	.686	2	24	.513	.054
Dimension	Hotelling's Trace	.057	.686	2	24	.513	.054
	Roy's Largest R	.057	.686	2	24	.513	.054

\*Note. Partial Eta Squared should be interpreted using the following criteria: “.01 = Weak, .06 = Moderate, and .14 = Large” (Gray & Kinnear, 2012, p 323; see also, Pallant, 2016, p 285).

As presented in Table 3, the first voice dimension (i.e., presence and clarity of ideas) had the highest mean (M = 57.30, SE = 3.16). This was followed by the second, i.e., manner of idea presentation, (M = 55.48, SE = 2.46), and the third, i.e., writer and reader presence (M = 49.03, SE = 4.400) dimensions. However, as multivariate tests revealed (see Table 2), there were no significant differences between overall means on three dimensions disregarding time (F (2, 24) = 2.85, p > .05,  $\eta^2 = .193$  representing a large effect size).

TABLE 3  
Descriptive Statistics of Overall Means by Dimensions

Voice Dimension*	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
First	57.308	3.165	50.789	63.826
Second	55.481	2.465	50.404	60.558
Third	49.038	4.403	39.970	58.107

Note. First: presence and clarity of ideas; Second: manner of idea presentation; Third: writer and reader presence

Finally, as displayed in Table 4 and Figure 1, at both pretest and posttest, the first dimension (i.e., presence and clarity of ideas) had the highest means which were followed by the second (i.e., manner of idea presentation) and the third (i.e., writer and reader presence) dimensions. As reported in table 2 above, no significant interaction was found between time and authorial voice dimensions (F (2, 24) = .686, p > .05,  $\eta^2 = .054$  representing a weak effect size).



TABLE 4  
Descriptive Statistics: Interaction between Time and Voice Dimensions

Time	Dimension*	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pretest	First	44.231	3.968	36.058	52.403
	Second	41.346	3.437	34.268	48.425
	Third	37.692	4.877	27.648	47.737
Posttest	First	70.385	3.350	63.484	77.285
	Second	69.615	2.448	64.573	74.658
	Third	60.385	5.560	48.933	71.836

Note. First: presence and clarity of ideas; Second: manner of idea presentation; Third: writer and reader presence

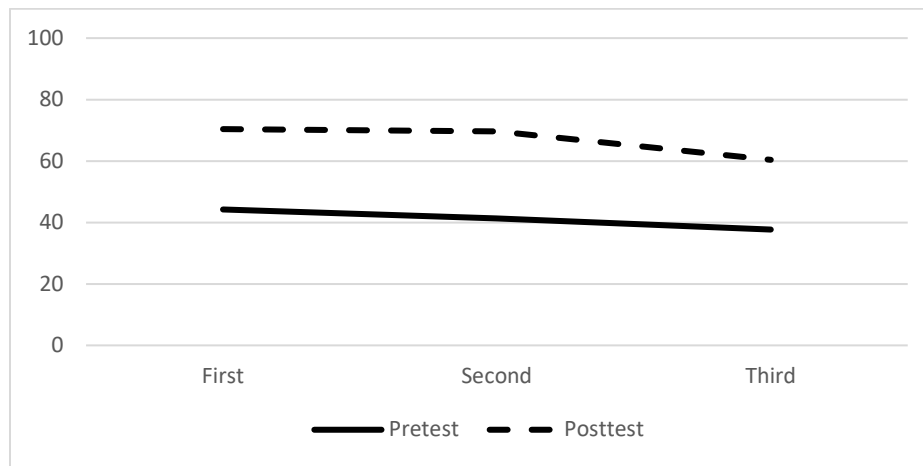


Figure 1. Interaction between time and voice dimensions.

To investigate any significant differences between levels of authorial voice, a simple effect analysis was also conducted (Field, 2018). The results displayed in Table 5 report each voice dimension’s improvement from pretest to posttest. The results of simple effect analysis indicated that the three dimensions showed significant increase in their means from pretest to posttest. Accordingly, based on the findings reported in Tables 2 and 5, the first null-hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE 5  
Pairwise Comparisons: Simple Effect Analysis of Time by Dimension

Dimension	(I) Time	(J) Time	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.*	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
First	Posttest	Pretest	26.154*	3.724	.000	18.484	33.824
Second	Posttest	Pretest	28.269*	3.362	.000	21.345	35.193
Third	Posttest	Pretest	22.692*	5.645	.000	11.067	34.318

\*Note. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Regarding the second research question, a repeated measures ANOVA was run to compare the means on the three gained scores to probe which voice dimension was affected more by instruction. The gain scores for the three dimensions were computed by subtracting posttest scores from pretests. Figure 2 depicts the descriptive statistics for the gained scores. The mean scores for the first, second, and third voice dimensions were 26.15,

28.26, and 22.69 respectively. As reported in Table 6, the results indicated that there were not any significant differences between the three gained scores ( $F(2, 24) = .686, p > .05, \eta^2 = .054$  representing a weak effect size). Thus, the second null-hypothesis was supported. That is, performance improvement on the three authorial voice dimensions were almost equally positively affected by the treatment.

TABLE 6  
Multivariate Tests with Dimensions and Gained Scores

	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Gain	Pillai's Trace	.054	.686	2	24	.513	.054
	Wilks' Lambda	.946	.686	2	24	.513	.054
	Hotelling's Trace	.057	.686	2	24	.513	.054
	Roy's Largest Root	.057	.686	2	24	.513	.054

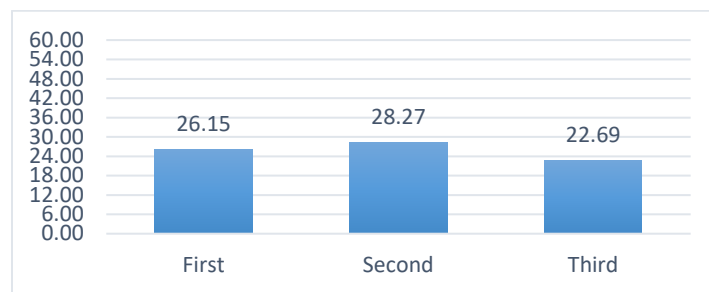


Figure 2. Means on the gained scores.

A paired-samples *t*-test was used to compare the participants' means on pretest and posttest of argumentative writing in order to probe the third research question. As displayed in Table 7, the participants had a higher mean on the posttest ( $M = 67.50, SD = 12.66$ ) of the quality of argumentative writing than that on pretest ( $M = 55.38, SD = 14.94$ ). Table 8 displays the results of the paired-samples *t*-test. That is, the results indicated that a significantly higher mean on the posttests of argumentative writing quality performance compared to pretest performances ( $t(25) = 4.30, p < .05, r = .652$  representing a large effect size<sup>4</sup>). Thus, the third null-hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE 7  
Descriptive Statistics: Argumentative Writing Performance

	Mean	N	SD	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	55.38	26	14.945	2.931
Posttest	67.50	26	12.669	2.485

<sup>4</sup>The *r* effect size was computed using the following formula;

$$r = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + df}$$

It should be interpreted based on these criteria: “.10 = Weak, .30 = Moderate, and .50 = Large.” (Field 2018, p 609)

TABLE 8  
*Paired-Samples Test: Pretest and Posttest of Argumentative Writing*

Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Paired Differences		t	df	Sig.
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
12.115	14.362	2.817	6.314	17.916	4.301	25	.000

## Qualitative Phase

### Respondents' views after authorial voice instruction

Seven participants (out of 10) claimed that they were not aware of authorial voice and voice-related dimensions (i.e., writer's presence, reader and writing dialogue, the use of eye-catching words, etc.) before attending the academic writing course. Three of them had heard of voice but they were neither sure of its usage nor clear understanding of the nature and function of authorial voice in L2 writing. These findings are represented in the following excerpts:

*I hadn't heard of this concept before, actually it was the first time that I learned it. Before this course, I didn't know that voice can be used in writing, too. It was my first experience of using voice in my writing which is and can be effective indeed. (Participant 2)*

*To tell you the truth, I didn't have any idea about voice before attending this course. After the course, I got familiar more and more with the concept of voice. (Participant 3)*

The above views revealed that MA students did not adequately appreciate the concept of authorial voice before the treatment. On the other hand, after the experiment, the stimulated recall interviews revealed that the presence and agency of voice-promoting pedagogy is influential in shaping voice mindset notably in their argumentative writing behavior (see Table 9).

TABLE 9  
*Respondents' Views Before and After voice instruction*

Participants	Before instruction	After instruction
P 2	<i>As I said, I did not pay attention to voice as I had no hint of it. I used to ask myself, how important to pose claims and counterclaims in my argumentation.</i>	<i>Then, I began to pay attention to authorial voice and its contributory role in my argumentative repertoire.</i>
P 3	<i>Actually, I did not have any idea of how to take advantage of voice in my writing.</i>	<i>Well, although my current knowledge of and ability to use voice in my argumentative writing performance is far from perfect, yet think that its explicit teaching makes me consciously aware." For example, in my opinion, authorial voice uniquely represents writers' point of view. One can express herself in different ways. It can be explicitly or implicitly. We can read her idea through the text.</i>
P 4	<i>I hadn't heard of this subject before.....</i>	<i>Actually, it was the first time that I learned it.</i>
P 8	<i>....</i>	<i>I think voice has two meanings. One is to have your own style of writing so that nobody can copy your text. The other is to have innovation and to present the content in a new way.</i>
P 9	<i>I did not know that voice is so significant in writing performance.</i>	<i>Now I have come to realize its importance that, so my attitude has changed ..."</i>
P 10	<i>I did not have information about voice... I never paid attention to it because I was not trained.</i>	<i>After this instruction, I gained lots of knowledge of voice. Further, I can add a better flavor to my writing.</i>

Furthermore, in the stimulated recall interviews, the respondents stated that as if the writer is talking to his listeners or audience through the text, he/she puts himself in the text in a way that is felt distinguishingly. For example, one of the students (p 3) interestingly expressed her ideas on the topic of ‘Does the internet connect people or isolate them?’ by reporting her own experience in using Internet. In this essay, the use of eye-catching words and metadiscourse features is also notable:

*People prefer to dwell on the virtual world rather than the actual world because of their panic-stricken emotions stemming from painful realities. I dramatically remember I was addicted to surfing the Internet for a while to catch a glimpse of what I was wonderfully passionate about (successful, delighted, and knowledgeable people), I immersed myself in it. However, I recall one time at a family social gathering, I felt extremely isolated. I could not have a conversation with anyone because I had not even a single worded worth sharing. Sadly, I could not create a bond with anyone that evening.*

Likewise, tracing participant 6, it is evident that he used several metadiscourse features to make a bridge between readers and himself. Thus, we further traced this issue in the posttest text (task 4) in which he applied metadiscourse features and readers’ engagement strategies. In his task 4, with the topic on ‘Single-sex universities can/cannot improve education?’, he started developing a claim by asking a simple question using second pronoun ‘you’ to invite the reader:

*“What is your opinion about the word “university” and the role students can play in shaping knowledge?”*

Even part of the conclusion section of his writing contains the metadiscourse features:

*Finally, suppose you are a teacher and you will be evaluated based on your students’ test scores, which one would you pay more attention to, your students learning or their test score?*

In his stimulated recall interview sessions, a writer (p 6) expressed:

*To me, voice is to have a clear viewpoint throughout the text. Besides the writer presents himself in the text, using words like "I", "me", "myself" and so on. It can also involve the reader by using the words such as "you", "your", "us", "we", etc. in the text. So, the reader will be involved and won't feel apart from the text. Finally, I thought I could challenge the reader's mind by asking a question and thus he will feel engaged in the text definitely.*

Providing personal and engaging examples as data for the claims is an added-value of learning voice in an argumentative writing performance. During the stimulated recall interviews, almost all the respondents highlighted this fact that using affective examples can add liveliness to their argumentative writing. In the following excerpt, one of the participants provided an example of her real life as represented in her task:

*...However, in my father's opinion, a working woman cannot get enough of her personal life and her life is not balanced. He opposes my mother working and believes that working women lose their personal lives and that they will not be successful housewives for their husbands and children. (Participant 8, one section of her task)*

She then expressed her views on using authorial voice in her tasks by saying:

*As I was taught, "voice" means the writer's presence throughout the text. My understanding of voice belongs to the time that I am present in a text as a writer. To do the tasks, I used some of my own personal examples and different subjects in my writing. I believe those parts have a stronger voice.*

Besides the *holistic* impact of voice-promoting pedagogy before and after the treatment, the respondents further elaborated on the *analytic* effect of voice-promoting pedagogy on different dimensions of voice. The views reflected in the interviews revealed that MA students have well-conceived of authorial voice dimensions. More specifically, most of the students (n=8) asserted that involvement and engagement of the reader and writer is the main purpose of the authorial voice. Three respondents mentioned that the text must be attractive enough for the reader not to get bored. Two of them believed that the primary goal was to give the text uniqueness and to make it different from others. All these assertions (see below excerpts) highlighted the dynamic presence of different dimensions of voice:

*Voice can make a text unique. Voice can change it from an ordinary one into an extraordinary. Voice is not an idea which can be found by searching, it is writer's knowledge and creativity to make the text unique and special. To me uniqueness is the purpose of voice. It has an active mode in which the reader will not be left passive. (Participant 5)*

*In my opinion, it is very important that the reader, while reading a paper feels you are next to him as if he or she is listening to you. To feel that it is not just a piece of paper or set of words gathered together or mentioned. I think it's a very interesting feature of voice. (Participant 4)*

*The purpose of voice is to make the text more interesting in a way that the reader's mind will be challenged. Therefore, he will not get bored and will follow the text as if the reader and writer are moving forward together. As a writer when I use special words the reader will realize my point of view and the level of certainty. Even if the reader may not believe in my words, he can begin to search and rely on his own findings. In this case I have been successful to attract his attention to the text. (Participant 8)*

In the following paragraph, the actual writing section of argumentative writing (i.e., claim and data) are provided to see improvements in how the writers are better equipped at stating their opinions and supporting their reasons:

*It has long been my belief that male and female students should go to segregated universities. Single-sex universities can contribute substantially to education in a positive way. Such contexts are immune as students can express their ideas very restfully. They are not obsessed with speaking openly, voicing their opinions, and trying to be themselves without bottling up their emotions. As a matter of fact, single-sex environment can be infinitely better than co-education since those who are painfully shy can gradually come out of their shell and speak their minds. Also, they tend to take more risks because they are not concerned of losing their face. What is more, the feeling of brotherhood and sisterhood can be cultivated among them (participant 7, claim and data section).*

### **Authorial voice and writing performance**

Besides the qualitative analysis of perspectives on voice-promoting pedagogy before and after the instruction, we further explored its effectiveness on students’ writing behavior. Most of the respondents (n=8) resonated the effectiveness of voice on their writing quality and argumentative writing behavior. As shown in Table 10, it is evident that applying authorial voice could develop students’ writing performance especially their argumentative writing performance. The results of qualitative phase, which are in concert with the quantitative outcomes, indicated that teaching voice can increase learners’ awareness to the extent that writers learn how to employ voice features to change their writing style into a more sophisticated one. For instance, three participants repeatedly mentioned that voice provides a space to exchange ideas and opinions through which they could showcase their unique perspective and stance, a mechanism which is essential in creating sound argumentative performance. During the interviews, they remarked that learning the concept authorial voice has been very effective not only on their writing performance but also on their viewpoints toward an issue.

TABLE 10  
*Themes Extracted with Respect to Authorial Voice and Writing Performance*

Theme	Description	Excerpts from Interviews
Writing quality	Improvement of writing quality by employing voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>There has been a dramatic change in my writing, since I've learned voice.</i></li> <li>• <i>Voice can strengthen the weak points of my writing.</i></li> </ul>
Argumentation quality	Improvement of the argumentative essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Voice is so useful in argumentative writing especially in rebuttal section. If we are going to prove an idea, voice is necessary there to support our point of view.</i></li> </ul>
Attitude	A change in attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>After getting to know the concept of voice, I found out I shouldn't agree or disagree on an issue immediately."</i></li> </ul>
Personal life impact	Voice knowledge affecting other life aspects besides writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I've gained the knowledge of negotiation in my job due to voice.</i></li> </ul>
Emotional reaction	Voice knowledge affecting someone's emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Now, I'm more confident and know how to present my opinions and even persuade others.</i></li> </ul>

They acknowledged the contributory role of voice in boosting critical thinking which is believed to be an essential part of contemporary life. Interestingly, after the course, five participants admitted that voice should be embedded in academic writing courses and be an integral part of writing agenda (see Table 10). We further found out that learning voice has been a great experience for writers to increase their power of presenting an

idea. One of the participants tried to apply eye-catching words and examples intentionally based on the rubric assessment:

*As I got to know voice in argumentative writing little by little, I learnt how to develop my text and engage the reader, too. Challenging the reader's mind to agree or disagree was one effective side of voice. Now it is much easier for me to write and communicate with my readers due to voice. Voice in writing can create an atmosphere to discuss and share our opinions (a space to exchange opinions) (Participant 9)*

Likewise, some of the respondents represent their identity and mindset in their texts. For example, one of the students represent her identity both in text and stimulated recall interview. As shown in her text, she revealed her religious identity by intentional use of religious jargon which can further highlight her religious identity. Such representation represents the authorial voice as a dialogic and socially-constructed means of self-representation (Fogal, 2019).

*From a religious point of view, it is interesting that our religion Islam, had a prediction more than fourteen centuries ago; when Muhammad ibn Muslim asked Imam Baqir: "When will our ruler appear?" Imam said: "when men pretend to be women and women become like men". Perhaps the rationale behind this behavior can be discovered with the help of another narration: People are greedy for what is forbidden. (Participant 10, one section of her argumentative task)*

In her interview session, she reflects on such religious-laden text:

*...well in my teaching and writing, I have a religious style and language that I apply. If you read my texts, you would find out different religious-loaded words which have been used intentionally. I guess that is my voice! A reader can understand my religious viewpoints through the vocabulary used.*

Most interviewees asserted the effectiveness of voice in witting performance notably in an argumentative genre. More specifically, participant 4 uniquely highlights the role of voice in rebuttal section:

*Voice is so useful in argumentative writing especially in the rebuttal section. If we are going to prove an idea, voice is necessary there to support our point of view. In my opinion, using voice is definitely needed in an argumentative writing. (Participant 10)*

It seems that authorial voice intervention might facilitate learning this complex argumentative component in developing argumentative writing quality. Similarly, by claiming that voice is a kind of art in a piece of writing, student 5 considered voice as a contributory tool which improves argumentative writing by making it more attractive:

*Learning voice and applying it has turned my writings into better ones. I guess it is a part of writing science which is believed to improve the quality of writing. It is an academic knowledge of writing. To me it sounds like an art. (Participant 5)*

In addition to the effectiveness of authorial voice on boosting writers' performance, some challenges students encountered in developing authorial voice in L2 argumentative writing were also identified (see Table 11).

TABLE 11  
*Students’ Challenges in Creating Voice in L2 Argumentative Writing*

Theme	Description	Excerpts from Interviews
Choosing appropriate words and right syntax	Lexical competence; Syntactic complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I had to spend lots of time on selecting words and structures.</i></li> </ul>
Innovation and creativity	Creativity in writing; to be unique was a big challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Creativity was difficult for me. I wanted to have a new idea in a unique way in my work so I had to read a lot to write.</i></li> </ul>
Developmental nature of voice	Knowing how to apply voice requires the skill, knowledge, and time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>My first challenge was to use voice in my writing. I didn’t know how to have an authorial voice in my writing. It takes time.</i></li> </ul>
Cohesion and coherence	Keeping the sentences coherent and cohesive shows writer’s ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I had difficulty in joining sentences and having coherence.</i></li> </ul>

### Discussion

The findings of this innovative mixed-methods research reveal how different dimensions of authorial voice converge to exert an impact on MA students’ authorial voice repertoire in the production of genre-specific domain (i.e., argumentative writing) in an EFL context. Our findings resonate the viability of authorial voice pedagogy in L2 argumentative writing, and as such provide empirical-based evidence for the concern raised by Zhao (2014) on teachability of voice. Such teachability of authorial voice in EFL setting is warranted as non-Western writers can shape, construct, and promote strong authorial voice through an appropriate pedagogy (see Matsuda, 2001; Zhao & Llosa, 2008). Hence, such pedagogical agenda can raise EFL learners’ awareness, and suggest that such awareness-raising agenda can engender L2 voice competency for these non-Western students. As for the effectiveness of authorial voice on students’ writing progression, the quantitative and qualitative results reveal that voice-promoting pedagogy is influential in promoting students’ voice repertoire. Although the quantitative results revealed that the three authorial voice dimensions were almost equally affected by the treatment, the qualitative findings showed the tendency of writers to apply ‘reader-and-writer engagement’ more prevalently than other dimensions. This might represent L2 learners’ interpersonal positioning in which “the person behind the written words” (Hirvela & Belcher, 2001, p. 85) construct a socially-constructed and dialogic representation of self (Ivanič & Camps, 2001).

Given the reported correlation between authorial voice and argumentative writing in the literature (Mitchell, 2017; Yoon, 2017; Zabihi et al., 2019), such socially-constructed voice mindset which might roughly represent interpersonal argumentative behavior—“the exchange and mutual testing of reasons” (Rapanta & Hamble, 2015, p.264)—is warranted in EFL academic context notably for postgraduate MA students. Throughout MA studies notably when EFL students want to choose a topic for research and prepare for writing their proposal, they need not only academic literacies but they should also promote their interpersonal argumentative mindset to evaluate research trends, ask questions, consult and/or argue with supervisors and advisors, and learn academic writing as “a means for entering a conversation” (Graff & Birkenstein, 2010, p. xiii). Such potential asset might equip MA students to shape their prospective argumentative competence which is of prime significance in academic disciplines and in EFL contexts. As Winesburg (2005) asserts, “expertise in academic disciplines” is not stemming from amalgamation of factual knowledge. “Rather it is the result of having developed patterns of thinking appropriate to the discipline that leads the expert to see patterns, ask questions, and anticipate possibilities” (p. 41).

As for the effect of authorial-voice pedagogy on L2 argumentative writing quality as operationalized on a six-component framework (Qin & Karabacak, 2010; Stapleton & Wu, 2015), the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals that applying authorial voice can develop students’ argumentative writing



performance. Notably, aside from the influences which derive from such integration, we found out that voice-promoting pedagogy can boost creativity and critical thinking, and therefore alters the stance of the writer, which may subsequently lead to writers' success in creating sound argumentative essays (Abdollahzadeh et al., 2017; Qin & Karabacak, 2010). This finding might bring an evidence-based answer to the concern raised in the literature whereby the quality of argumentative writing rather than the surface structure or "shell of argument" matters for L2 writers notably in the EFL context (Stapleton & Wu, 2015, p.12).

There have been concerns in the literature about the quality of arguments produced in EFL writing contexts as far from complete and inadequate (Moghadam, 2010; Qin & Karabacak, 2010; Rusfandi, 2015; Stapleton & Wu, 2015; Trinh & Truc, 2014). It is argued that providing such voice-promoting agenda in L2 argumentative writing might boost L2 writers in constructing "high-quality written argumentation as defined by an ability to articulate and defend contentious positions" (Sadler, 2004, p. 523).

Interestingly, such effectiveness is more highlighted when some of the students resonate their identity in L2 argumentative writing through the lens of authorial voice. For example, tracing a writer's text and tracking her assertion through the stimulated recall interview (as reported in the results), we found out *who the writer was* and *what the mindset she had*. She envisioned her religious identity by the intentional use of the religious jargon. The representation of Islamic identity which is highly attached to Iranian EFL learners is notable. Such unique finding resonates the contributory role of voice in developing EFL writers' identity (see Matsuda & Tardy, 2007; Zhao, 2013), signifying the fact that writers can display their own self-representation and identity through argumentation, one which is highly needed in academia to construct arguing-to-display-academic identity (Zhao & Llosa, 2008). Such inference chimes in with Goffman's (1959) assertion that people look for golden opportunities to present themselves.

On the other hand, our qualitative findings further highlight some challenges students encountered in developing authorial voice in L2 argumentative writing. These challenges might fall into two profiles. The first set of challenges were text-related features such as lexical and syntactic components. L2 writers need to bring eye-catching and appealing structures to distinguish themselves from their peers and hence increase the strength of voice in L2 argumentative writing. Therefore, the strategic use of lexical components (i.e., lexical density, lexical sophistication) and syntactic awareness pedagogy can also help L2 writers to bring unique flavors to their argumentative writing presentation. These L2 text producers need to work on their lexical and syntactic features and subsequently enhance their lexical-syntactic competence (see Liu, 2021).

The second group of challenges is related to lack of innovation and creativity in supporting or refuting (counter) claims in L2 argumentative writing. This might resonate the developmental nature of voice-pedagogy and the dialogic nature of argumentation with verbal, social, and rational components (see van Eemeren et al., 1996). These reported challenges might signify the fact that "voice is as complicated as the self it is assumed to evoke and is as socially situated and culturally embedded as the self is understood to be" (Sperling & Appleman, 2011, p. 82).

## Conclusion and Implications

This innovative mixed-methods research provides empirical evidence for the oft-cited question posed in L2 writing literature on authorial voice teachability in L2 argumentative writing performance. Apart from teachability of voice, we further traced MA students' writing performance, their perceptions, and challenges they encountered in projecting voice in an EFL setting. Such multidimensional study provides different pedagogical and methodological implications for EFL writing research and instruction.

In response to the lack of pedagogical culture in the literature (Fogal, 2020, Zhao, 2014, 2015), the present study expands the viability of voice-promoting pedagogy in L2 argumentative writing and adds new insights

into authorial voice literature. The findings reveal that voice-pedagogy in L2 argumentative writing should be embedded in academic writing courses and be an integral part of writing agenda. This said, it is recommended to enhance writer instructors' voice-based content knowledge and boost their voice-competence in L2 argumentative writing. This is viable through conducting instructional agenda and pedagogical workshops in L2 academic writing stemming from research-informed teaching. Furthermore, the unified operationalization of voice (Zhao, 2013) as a pedagogical tool in L2 argumentative writing courses can have a strong potential to promote students' learning and guide academic writing instructors to transparently evaluate, trace, and teach students in their academic writing courses. Such awareness can further help students to trace their progress/development of voice construction and bring a sense of meta-cognitive readiness to challenging tasks such as argumentative writing. Hence, they might regulate their negative emotions (i.e., emotion regulation strategies).

We inferred from qualitative findings that authorial voice intervention can further regulate L2 students' emotions. According to emotion-regulation perspective, those who fail to manage their emotional reactions to challenging events (e.g., as in argumentative writing), they might experience severe periods of distress that may bring about anxiety (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008). As such, voice-promoting pedagogy might help L2 writers to lessen their writing anxiety levels and boost their confidence in producing sound arguments using secondary components such as counter-claims and rebuttal components.

This study further shows the practical implementation of innovative mixed-methods research, which is recently emphasized in applied linguistics literature (Riazi, 2016, 2017). Such innovativeness in L2 writing literature represents the dynamicity of mixed-methods research to attend to multiaspectral and complex language learning and teaching issues such as authorial voice in L2 argumentative writing. It casts light on the different aspects of voice which provide a gestalt perspective of such pedagogical culture in L2 argumentative writing.

Furthermore, it was almost impossible for us to add a control group as a baseline for comparing the two groups. If possible, prospectively, future studies can exert such experimental designs with control groups to provide more robust findings. One reason for different conceptualization of authorial voice might be attributed to lack of systematic reviews of voice-related studies particularly with reference to two variables of authorial voice and L2 argumentative writing. As Eagly and Chaiken (2011) rightly stipulate, "a science without definitions of basic constructs would be chaotic" (p.583). As such, we maintain that a systematic and/or bibliometric review can provide a gestalt perspective on different conceptual, methodological, and topical dimensions of authorial voice.

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## Appendix A

TABLE 1A  
Holistic Voice Rubric

	Description
5	<p>The reader feels a very strong authorial voice in the writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reader feels a clear presence of a central idea (point of view) throughout the text.</li> <li>• The writing shows a strong commitment to the topic through full development of the central idea (point of view) with adequate use of effective examples and details.</li> <li>• The reader feels that he or she is being invited to participate in the discussion of the topic and the construction of an argument through the author's use of directive phrases when presenting ideas.</li> <li>• The idea (point of view) and use of examples and details in the writing are unique, interesting, and engaging, indicating sophisticated thinking behind the writing.</li> <li>• The writer presents ideas and claims with language that shows authority and confidence.</li> <li>• The reader feels that the writer has a clear stance on and a strong attitude toward the topic under discussion.</li> <li>• The tone of the writing shows personality, adds life to the writing, and is engaging and appropriate for the intended reader.</li> <li>• Word choice, and language use by extension, is varied, often interesting, sophisticated, and eye-catching to the reader.</li> <li>• The writer reveals him- or herself in the writing either directly or indirectly, giving the reader a clear sense of who the writer is as a unique individual.</li> <li>• The reader feels that the writer is aware of and able to engage the reader effectively in a direct or subtle way.</li> <li>• The sharing of personal backgrounds and experiences, if any, is effective, genuine, and engaging to the reader. 4.0 The reader feels a fairly strong authorial voice in the writing.</li> </ul>
4	<p>The reader feels a fairly strong authorial voice in the writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some characteristics of 3.0 with several instances of superior characteristics of 5.0 3.0.</li> </ul>
3	<p>The reader feels a somewhat weak authorial voice in the writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reader feels that there is a central idea (point of view) in the text, but it is not fully developed.</li> <li>• The writing shows some commitment to the topic with proper use of some supporting examples and details. But the examples are not always appropriate or effective.</li> <li>• The reader occasionally feels that he or she is being invited to participate in the discussion of the topic; but more often, the reader feels a lack of interaction with the writer.</li> <li>• The idea (point of view) and the use of examples and details in the writing are safe and general, lacking uniqueness, sophistication, or thoughtfulness.</li> <li>• The writer presents ideas and claims somewhat mildly; only occasionally does the writing show some degree of authority and confidence.</li> <li>• The writer seems to have a stance on the topic under discussion, but no strong attitude is revealed in the writing.</li> <li>• The tone of the writing is appropriate for the intended reader and the purpose of the writing, but lacks personality and liveliness.</li> <li>• Occasional interesting word choice and language use may catch the reader's attention, but the effect is inconsistent.</li> <li>• The writer reveals him- or herself in the writing to some extent, leaving the reader with some sense of who he/she is.</li> <li>• The reader feels that the writer is aware of and trying to engage the reader in a way, but with limited success. • The sharing of personal backgrounds and experiences, if any, is genuine but not so engaging or effective to the reader.</li> </ul>
2	<p>The reader feels a very weak authorial voice in the writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some characteristics of 1.0 with several instances of superior characteristics of 3.0</li> </ul>
1	<p>The reader cannot really feel the presence of an authorial voice in the writing.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reader cannot find a consistent central idea (point of view) in the text.</li> <li>• The writing does not show any commitment to the topic; rather, it is only an attempt (or a failed attempt) to answer a question. No examples or details are used to develop the topic.</li> <li>• The reader feels that the writer is not concerned with the reader, and the writing is a confusing monologue instead of a clear dialogue between the writer and the reader.</li> <li>• The writing is generic and lifeless.</li> <li>• The writer presents ideas and claims very mildly, showing a lack of authority and confidence in what he/she is writing.</li> <li>• The writer seems indifferent and does not have a clear stance on or attitude toward the topic under discussion.</li> <li>• The writer writes in a monotone that does not engage the reader at all; oftentimes the reader find him- or herself drifting off while reading the text.</li> <li>• Word choice or language use is flat, general, and dull, and thus unable to catch the reader’s attention.</li> <li>• The reader has little or no sense of who the writer is as a unique individual instead of a generic, faceless person.</li> <li>• The reader feels that the writer is not concerned with the reader or completely fails to engage the reader in any way.</li> <li>• The sharing of personal backgrounds and experiences, if any, is generic, ineffective, and even inappropriate, making the reader feel annoyed.</li> </ul>
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### Appendix B

TABLE 1 B  
*Analytic Scoring Rubric for Argumentative Writing Quality*

Toulmin elements	Description
Claim(s) (5%)	<b>0 or 5 (presence)</b>
Data (25%)	<p><b>0:</b> a.no reasons are provided for the claim(s); <b>or</b> b. none of the reasons are relevant to/ support the claim(s).</p> <p><b>10.</b> a. provide only one reason for the claim(s) <b>or</b> b. the reason provided is weak or irrelevant.</p> <p><b>15.</b> a. Provides one to two reasons for the claim(s), <b>and</b> b. Some reasons are sound/acceptable, but some are weak or irrelevant.</p> <p><b>20.</b> a. Provides multiple reasons for the claim(s), <b>and</b> b. Most reasons are sound/acceptable and free of irrelevancies, but one or two are weak.</p> <p><b>25.</b> a. Provides multiple reasons for the claim(s), <b>and</b> b. All reasons are sound/acceptable and free of irrelevancies.</p>
Counterargument claim(s)/alternative point(s) of view (10%)	<b>0 OR 10 (Presence)</b> Provides counterargument claim(s)/alternative view(s)
Counterargument data/supporting reasons for alternative point(s) of view (25%)	<p><b>0.</b> a. No reasons are provided for the counterargument claim(s)/alternative view(s); <b>or</b> b. None of the reasons are relevant to/support the counterargument claim(s)/alternative view(s).</p> <p><b>10.</b> a. Provides only one reason for the counterargument claim(s)/alternative view(s), <b>or</b> b. The counterargument/reason for the alternative view is weak or irrelevant.</p> <p><b>15.</b> a. Provides one to two reasons for the counterargument claim(s) /alternative view(s), <b>and</b> b. Some counterarguments/reasons for the alternative view(s) are sound/acceptable, but some are weak or irrelevant.</p>



	<p><b>20.a.</b> Provides multiple reasons for the counterargument claim(s)/alternative view(s), <b>and</b> <b>b.</b> Most counterarguments/reasons for the alternative view(s) are sound/acceptable and free of irrelevancies, but one or two are weak.</p> <p><b>25. a.</b> Provides multiple reasons for the counterargument claim(s) /alternative view(s), <b>and</b> <b>b.</b> All counterarguments/reasons for the alternative view(s) are sound/acceptable and free of irrelevancies.</p>
<p>Rebuttal claim(s) (10%)</p>	<p><b>0 or 10</b>                  Provides rebuttal claim(s)</p>
<p>Rebuttal data<sup>a</sup> (25%)</p>	<p><b>0.</b> a. No rebuttals are provided; <b>or</b> b. None of the rebuttals can refute the counterarguments.</p> <p><b>10.</b> a. Refutes/points out the weaknesses of some counterarguments, <b>or</b> b. Few of the rebuttals are sound/acceptable; most of them are weak, <b>or</b> c. The reasoning quality of most rebuttals are weaker than that of the counterarguments.</p> <p><b>15.</b> a. Refutes/points out the weaknesses of all the counterarguments, <b>and</b> b. Some rebuttals are sound/acceptable, but some are weak, <b>or</b> c. The reasoning quality of some rebuttals are stronger than that of the counterarguments, while some are weaker than that of the counterarguments.</p> <p><b>20.</b> a. Refutes/points out the weaknesses of all the counterarguments, <b>and</b> b. Most rebuttals are sound/acceptable, but one or two are weak, <b>or</b> c. The reasoning quality of most rebuttals are stronger than that of the counterarguments, while one or two are equal to that of the counterarguments.</p> <p><b>25.</b> a. Refutes/points out the weaknesses of all the counterarguments, <b>and</b> b. All rebuttals are sound/acceptable, <b>or</b> c. The reasoning quality of all the rebuttals are stronger than that of the counterarguments.</p>