

# Investigating undergraduate EFL students' argumentative essay: Its generic structure and language features

Astri Nabila Putri<sup>a,1</sup>, Cahya Komara<sup>b,2</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka, Tanah Merdeka street Kp. Rambutan, Jakarta 13830, Indonesia

<sup>b</sup> University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka, Tanah Merdeka street Kp. Rambutan, Jakarta 13830, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup> [astrinabilaputri@gmail.com](mailto:astrinabilaputri@gmail.com) ; <sup>2</sup> [cahya.komara@uhamka.ac.id](mailto:cahya.komara@uhamka.ac.id)

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history

Received 14 January 2022

Revised 12 February 2022

Accepted 10 March 2022

### Keywords

Investigating

Argumentative Essay

Generic Structure

Language Features

## ABSTRACT

This research is about investigating undergraduate EFL students' argumentative essay especially in the aspects of generic structure and language features. As far known, argumentative essay is the most or common type of essay that is studied by plenty undergraduate EFL students across the world (Mei, 2006), and the indicators of successful argumentative essay is through the correct generic structure and suitable language features that writer used. However, in Indonesia context, many of them failed to write argumentative essay well (Rahmatunisa, 2014; Saputra et al., 2021; Situmorang et al., 2020; Turmudi, 2020). Hence, it is necessary to find the information of why they got problems about the undergraduate EFL students' argumentative essay by investigating first the quality of their arguments, then to explore more the reasons behind their problems. Thirty students aged 18-21 were participated in this research who had learned and experienced in argumentative writing. The researchers applied qualitative descriptive approach with the use of argumentative writing test and interview as instruments. The result indicated majority participants truly got issue with the proper generic structure and suitable language features. It is exposed 3 dominant factors that caused the students' lack of argumentative writing which were students' factor, teacher factor, and theory factor.

This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



How to Cite: Putri, A. N., & Komara, C. (2022). Investigating undergraduate EFL students' argumentative essay: Its generic structure and language features. *International Undergraduate Conference on English Education, IUCEE Proceeding 2022, 1*(1), p. 47-58

## 1. Introduction

Writing, by its definition, is an activity to create works in the form of writing; a transactions with words where someone frees him or herself from what he and she thinks or feels (Brown, 2000). Writing is seen as one of English skill that is remarkably significant and desirable to be learned by students (Clark, 2011; Klimova, 2012). Unlike any other skills, having writing skill provides various possibility or opportunity to communicate English widely compared to just listening or reading something since writing is categorized as productive skill and being used for plenty purposes such as writing story, academic paper or non-academic article (Nation, 2008). Besides, writing provides different dimension and nuance than saying it directly through verbal or spoken mode (Weigle, 2002). Sometimes, students are way more frightened to speak in front of other audience, so they may apply writing that provides clear structure or specific language features to follow and have more time to finish, hence they can share the message they want comfortably. This is to show how writing always becomes the critical English skill to be learned most by the students either in second or foreign language contexts. The good things about having writing proficiency are well noticed by

students; they used this skill to support them to succeed in further academic or non-academic matters.

Although learning writing tends to preferably selected by students for some reasons explained before, in reality, it is well-known that mastering writing is not as simple as students imagine. In Indonesia context for instance, many English as Foreign Language (EFL) students are known to get difficulties in writing specific topics or genre they learn in school (Husna & Multazim, 2019; Ismayanti & Kholiq, 2020; Koilara et al., 2020). Just for information, students in Indonesia are required to have the writing ability with learning specific genre of text obliged in national school syllabus, such as descriptive, narrative, recount, report, and etc., meanwhile, for the higher education level, students learn like exposition and argumentation types. Teachers or lecturers and students know this as English writing material of types of text. Gorlach in Herman (2009) explicated that type of text is as a specific linguistic pattern that has formal or structural characteristics and standardized uses of language. Each type of texts has different generic structure and language features to make the text can be easily understood by readers. This knowing of generic structure and language features of particular text plays a crucial role, and it is regarded to make students master the text correctly and reach the communicative purposes or social function of text successfully.

Among plenty type of texts learned by Indonesia EFL students, argumentative text can be said to be the hardest to master (Komara & Sriyanto, 2018). The one of reason is writing argumentative requires definite facts to write it down, and the argument of an author is also very necessary in argumentative writing. Coffin (2004) explained that argumentative is a type of text that requires the author to provide an argument or opinion on an issue logically supported by reasons, evidence, and data in order to successfully influence the reader. For higher education level students, writing argumentative is mostly done in format of essay, which is a piece of writing that consists of a group of paragraphs and written by discussing a topic or a main idea (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). Whatever the format is, argumentative is types of writing or text or essay which involves giving arguments in writing to then further argue according to what the author understands and thinks. In the context of giving an argument, the writer is given the freedom to be able to present ideas or opinions that are not only relevant but also constructive. This opinion aims to facilitate its communicative purpose, namely influencing the reader. Schaffner (2002) strengthened that the key point for the students or writers are to be more expressive in conveying their ideas on a topic as a manifestation of intensive communication in their argumentative writing. Therefore, the readers at least get the points and consider the author's arguments or can even get influenced with the writers around the issues discussed.

Moreover, in writing argumentative essay, it is also required some counter ideas called a rebuttal for giving different side of the issue or thesis statement; however, it depends on the writer's writing genre to follow and the position writer's make towards issue. According to Bazerman (2010), when writing an argumentative essay in response to a topic, a writer will convincingly put position either agreeing or disagreeing. Next, according to Toulmin's model argument, argumentative writing involves six elements: claim, data, cause, backup, rebuttal, and modifier (Zhang, 2018), meanwhile common fundamental structure of argumentative essay consists of three sections: a thesis, an argument, and a conclusion (Schneer, 2014). The pattern is always same; establish their argument with strong reasons, and also provide solid proof to convince the reader that their perspective is accurate (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). In more details, Al-Haq and Ahmed (1994) stated that the purposes of having or following the right pattern of argumentative essays, it can describe, clarify, and show the point of view clearly, and it can persuade the readers powerfully. Hence, writer needs to be more aware of the structure of argumentative essay.

It is noticeable that argumentative essay has its specific structure or organization. This is well-known by generic structure. Generic Structure, according to Beittel (2002), is a general case of a genre; each genre has its own scheme. It identifies the text's structure based on its internal patterning of rhetorical arrangement. The generic structure of the text relates to how it would be structured to help readers follow and comprehend the content. An argumentative essay's purpose is to clearly establish a point of view, logic, and evidence. A good argumentative essay must have the structures such as introduction, topic sentences, body paragraphs, and conclusion. The first paragraph of your essay should explain the issue, providing background information necessary for understanding your argument, outline the evidence you will present, and explain your thesis. The second of paragraph is the thesis paragraph, which is part of your first paragraph. It is a one-sentence description of your

main part and argument. The third is body paragraphs, a basic argumentative essay is organized into three or more paragraphs that explain why you support your topic. Each body paragraph should explore a new idea or piece of evidence that include a subject sentence that explains why the reader should agree with your perspective in a clear and simple manner. Body paragraphs are where you provide examples, research, statistics, studies, and text citations to back up your statements. Last, conclusion, one paragraph that confirms your thesis and summarizes all of your body paragraphs' arguments. A good ending will relate to a reader's emotions rather than adding fresh facts and further arguments. In certain contexts, writers will offer a personal tale to show how the issue effects them personally.

Gerot, L., & Wignell, (1995) provided a more comprehensive picture of the appropriate parameters or criteria for generic structure than just format of essay explained above. They argued that argumentative writing is divided into two; exposition and discussion.

Table 1. Genre of Argument

Genre	Social Function	Generic Structure
Exposition	To present 1 side or view about an issue.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement</li> <li>• Preview</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point</li> <li>• Elaboration</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Conclusion or reiteration</li> </ol>
Discussion	To present (at least) two points of view about an issue	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement</li> <li>• Preview</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Arguments for and against or statements of differing points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point</li> <li>• Elaboration</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Conclusion or recommendation</li> </ol>

Moreover, argumentative essay has also its specific language feature. Language features is functioned to assist a good argumentative writing either in exposition or discussion genre. For instance, the language features of argumentative writing were exposed by Gerot, L., & Wignell, (1995), such as 1) Focus on generic human and non-human Participants, except for speaker or writer referring to self, 2) Use of Mental Processes: to state what writer thinks or feels about issue e.g., realise, feel, appreciate, 3) Use of Material Processes: to state what happens e.g., is polluting, drive, travel, spend, should be treated, 4) Relational Processes: to state what is or should be e.g., doesn't seem to have been, is, and 5) Use of simple present tense. Meanwhile for discussion type, the language feature, according to Gerot, L., & Wignell, (1995), were 1) Focus on generic human and generic non-human Participants, 2) Use of Material Processes e.g., has produced, have developed, to feed, 3) Use of Relational Processes e.g., is, could have, cause, are, 4) Use of Mental Processes e.g., feel, 5) Use of Comparative: contrastive and Consequential Conjunctions, and 5) Reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns (abstraction).

Studying and researching argumentative essay is always fascinating. It can be known by so many researchers who have conducted research related to students' argumentative writing. First is known from Rahmatunisa (2014) who looked into the difficulties that some EFL students had while writing argumentative essays. The statistics showed that students had challenges in three categories: language problems, cognitive problems, and psychological concerns. The majority of linguistics difficulties seen by pupils were related to grammatical structure (23.2 percent), word formatting (30.2 percent), word classes (16.3 percent), word use errors (9.3 percent), and the use of articles (21 percent). Second, cognitive issues are associated with paragraph organization, difficulty in retaining word classes, losing the general structure, drawing a conclusion, and placing punctuation. Finally, EFL students encounter psychological issues such as laziness, egoism, bad mood, and difficulty starting to write.

Next, Turmudi (2020) has also done research by publishing proven evidence in which the majority of the students do not offer a refutation or rebuttal in their argumentative essays. It clearly suggests that the knowledge of the argumentation and the flows of the rhetoric of this genre has to be emphasized in the exercise since this genre is essentially overlapped with the debate genre in which both sides provide argument and counter argument or rebuttal. In addition, there is researcher from Saputra et al (2021) who explained about EFL students' problem in writing, he conclude that students confronted cognitive, linguistic, and mental issues once they write argumentative essays. In cognitive factors, the trouble observed is lack of expertise on the important thing capabilities of an argumentative essay. In linguistic factors, the scholars have issues concerning the content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, claim, and proof. Meanwhile, in mental factors they've issues with worry of making mistakes, loss of self-esteem, and coffee motivation. These findings call for interest from the academics of Advanced Writing direction in particular at the wishes of extra specific education on writing claims and offering proof in argumentative essays. The findings additionally endorse that extra powerful technique of coaching argumentative writing is wanted to conquer college students' issues.

From another researcher, Situmorang et al (2020) who have done research about analysis of students' problem in writing argumentative text explained that Based on the results of the research carried out, the following aspects of the assessment were taken on students in the ongoing research process: 1) content: expansion topic, 2) Organizational characteristics includes unity, coherence, and conceptual order, 3) Vocabulary: word selecting or reference books, and 4) Grammar: sentence arrangement. Researchers discovered that one of the challenges pupils faced was a lack of awareness of what the concept "argument" meant. When researchers encounter students, who do not immediately begin the process of creating argument texts once the "writing" guidelines have been given, researchers understand this. The observation results found by researchers demonstrated that students continue to lack awareness in creating argumentative texts, which is caused by a lack of understanding both structurally employing argumentative text grammatical and in the subject of the text itself.

Meantime, there is researcher who conducted the difficulties argumentative writing by gendered perspective (Abbas Zare-ee, 2013), he conclude that the findings of this study indicate that the quality of argumentative texts created by male and female undergraduate EFL students might be interpreted differently. The holistic scores given to different qualities of their writings according to their score guidelines can be used to evaluate the quality of L2 text types. Because of the individual qualities of social conditions for learning English, the perception of female undergraduate EFL learners as better learners or good L2 writer may not be necessarily accurate. Although there have been many researches on the difficulties in argumentative writing, the writer wants to investigating the difficulties and quality EFL students of undergraduate writing who have studied essay writing, especially in the use of structure and language features.

From the explanation above, the researchers get interested to pay more attention to investigate the undergraduate EFL students' argumentative essay by focusing on checking the correctness of generic structure and the appropriate of language features used by the students. The researchers propose two main questions: 1) How is the quality of EFL students' argumentative essay based on its correctness generic structure and proper or sufficient language features? and 2) If the quality of the argumentative essay of the EFL students are dominantly low, then what are the factors that make undergraduate EFL students get problem in writing argumentative essay? Hopefully, the result of this research can examine and show the quality of undergraduate EFL students' argumentative essay based on its correct generic structure and suitable or sufficient language features and what factors that make them get issue in writing good argumentative essay. Thus, it can contribute to the works of undergraduate EFL students' argumentative writing.

## 2. Method

In this research, the researchers involved 30 undergraduate EFL students who studied argumentative essay at Universities of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka Jakarta Indonesia. Their ages are around 18-21 years old. For the method, the researchers used descriptive qualitative method as it was relevant with the goal of this research; to find out the quality of students' argumentative essay as well as to know what factors that make the students get difficulties in writing argumentative

essay writing especially in generic structure and language features. Creswell & Creswell (2018) explicated that qualitative study focuses on image, text, recording, observation to get data, and this method requires multiple analysis of the data to be described.

Next, the researchers used two instruments for collecting data which were argumentative writing test (topic; Online Learning) and interview form (see link: <https://bit.ly/3gMhuOj>). The argumentative writing test was aimed to examine the quality of students' argumentative essay (generic structure and language features). Meanwhile, interview form was purposed to confirm the result of argumentative writing test given previously for the participants. The interview was conducted through zoom meeting by asking sample of participants. Lastly, after the all data were collected, the researchers tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted the data comprehensively (2 evaluators) by following the Gerot & Wignell (1995) generic structure and language features schemes.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

In this section, the researchers presented the 30 argumentative essays analysis' result from 2 evaluators based on its generic structure and language features. The aim was to reveal the suitability of the patterns or steps of the student's English argumentative essays in order to achieve their communicative goals or social functions.

Based on the results from 30 data, it can be seen only 13 students who were successful in writing argumentative essay with correct generic structure and sufficient language features. Meanwhile, 17 students who were not successful or they got issues with either generic structure or in language features. So, it can be stated that dominantly 17 students or 57% were failed compared with 13 students or 43% who got succeed. The results of argumentative essays analysis were shown below.

Table 2. Recapitulation of Argumentative Essay Test

Respondent	Generic Structure		Remark	Language Features		Remark	Conclusion
	Evaluator	Evaluator		Evaluator	Evaluator		
	1	2		1	2		
R.1	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.2	√	√	Correct (Discussion)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.3	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.4	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.5	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.6	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.7	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.8	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.9	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.10	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.11	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.12	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.13	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.14	√	√	Correct (Discussion)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.15	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.16	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.17	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.18	√	√	Correct	X	X	Insufficient	Failed



			(Discussion)				
R.19	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.20	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.21	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.22	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.23	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.24	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.25	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.26	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.27	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed
R.28	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.29	√	√	Correct (Exposition)	√	√	Sufficient	Success
R.30	X	X	Incorrect	X	X	Insufficient	Failed

Next, the researchers put 2 examples of the correct and incorrect argumentative writing that was analyzed through Gerot, L., & Wignell, (1995) generic structure and language features schemes. The researchers have chosen Respondent 28 and 23 as 2 successful argumentative essays and Respondent 18 and 4 as 2 failed argumentative essays. Below was the analysis:

- *Respondent 28*

Stages	Text
<p><u>Issue</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has analyzed the thesis statement or preview from the essay.</p>	<p>Corona virus pandemic has been going through 2 years. It forces to limit all of the activities in every section, without exception for educational section. In this circumstance, school activities facing its limitation of face-to-face learning and students are doing thing called online learning. Online learning itself has some concerns that felt by students while they doing it, so in today's better situation, it should not be fully implemented. This essay will consider arguments that blended learnings more effective due to some reasons.</p>
<p><u>Argument</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has given the argument or point about the topic 'Online Learning'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First, the student will more understand about the subjects.</li> <li>- Second, blended learning makes the process of the learning is more efficient.</li> <li>- Finally, blended learning is more efficient than full online learning because it has many advantages that have already mentioned before.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Conclusion/reiteration</u> ←</p> <p>This text has a conclusion part and suitable with the argument.</p>	<p>In conclusion, blended learning is more efficient than online learning. The reason is because it can make students more understand the subject implementing blended learning can also help students to do practice of the students. In this situations, blended learning indeed be the best solution of educational activity that has limited before.</p>

From the respondent no. 28 above, it can be seen that respondent wrote an introduction or issue by giving intro first, “Corona virus pandemic has been going through 2 years. It forces to limit all of the activities in every section.....”. After a brief explanation regarding the intro, the respondent gave a thesis statement such as “This essay will consider arguments...” This was the point which will be discussed in the next paragraph or arguments. This showed that the respondent provided the introduction and thesis statement correctly. Furthermore, in the next paragraph, namely arguments, the respondent wrote the contents of the arguments such as “first...., second...., and finally....”. It can be seen that the content of the arguments was clearly correct and can be concluded in the next paragraph, namely the conclusion. Respondents gave a conclusion such as “In conclusion, blended learning is...” This proved that the content of the conclusion was the result of the previous paragraph of arguments which was briefly summarized point by point. So, the conclusion drawn from the author or respondent no.28 that the writer had written an argumentative essay structure correctly and provided sufficient language features seen from the data.

• *Respondent 23*

Stages	Text
<p><u>Issue</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has analyzed the thesis statement or preview from the essay.</p>	<p>The coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) which hit more than 200 countries in the world has become obstacles for educational institutions especially learning English. Corona virus pandemic has forced people to stay at home and minimize human contact to reduce the spread of the virus. Corona Virus is type of virus which diffuses in animals and some can be transmitted between animals and humans. The virus transmitted by airborne infection and through contact with infected surfaces. Since the new coronavirus can spread unnoticed so easily, the governments felt the best way to ensure people to have minimal contact with each other is to command large-scale social restrictions.</p>
<p><u>Argument</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has given the argument or point about the topic ‘Online Learning’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First, online education allows us to learn from a variety of mentors and teachers in a variety of fields, increasing our knowledge and expanding our perspectives.</li> <li>- Second, Online learning is frequently more affordable. Furthermore, when compared to regular classes methods, online learning is less expensive.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Conclusion/reiteration</u> ←</p> <p>This text has a conclusion part and suitable with the argument.</p>	<p>As conclusion, online learning makes it easier for students to take exams because they can take them anywhere and anytime, and they can view their scores directly. Students also do not need to attend class and interact with lecturers’ face to face. Based on all the above, online learning is one of the good technologies to continue to develop. That could be a step in the right direction for education in developing countries. Lastly, online learning allows students to strengthen their digital skills while also allowing them to access lessons without having to attend class. Online learning is one way to prepare students to comprehend lectures without having to meet with a teacher face to face.</p>

From the results of respondents no.23, it showed issues first in the beginning “The coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) .....” This was a good start to start an essay writing because it introduced a few topics of discussion that will be explained in the thesis statement such as ‘Since the new

*coronavirus can spread...*” From the thesis statement that has been written by the respondent, it can be seen that the introduction and thesis statement were correct, so it can be described more the arguments in the next paragraph. The arguments given to the respondent is in accordance with the argument writing, namely using the prefix *‘first and second’* in explaining the argument, and this uses the exposition technique by explaining point by point. After finishing explaining point by point, the respondent gave a conclusion from the writing that had been made so that it could be read briefly what was discussed such as *“As conclusion, online learning makes....”*. it can be concluded that respondent no.23 was good and correct argumentative writing.

Those were two examples which were successful in writing based on two evaluators through Gerot, L., & Wignell, (1995) model. From first until end of paragraphs, the respondents had succeeded in writing argumentative; in this case, they did not indicate having the difficulties on writing argumentative especially in generic structure and language features. After we knew the correct of argumentative writing by 2 respondents before, below were 2 failed examples argumentative writing especially in generic structure and language features.

- *Respondent 18*

Stages	Text
<p><u>Issue</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has analyzed the thesis statement or preview from the essay.</p>	<p>Online learning is an alternative learning system recommended by the government to press the current outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. However, this learning is not necessarily easy implement. For school that are far and remote, the learning media facilities are limited.</p>
<p><u>Argument</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has given the argument or point about the topic ‘Online Learning’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The positive and negative impacts of online learning on achievement during the pandemic include.</li> <li>- The negative impact of online learning on achievement during the pandemic.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Conclusion/reiteration</u> ←</p> <p>This text has a conclusion part and suitable with the argument.</p>	<p>Hopefully in the future this COVID- 19 will end quickly, so that learning in schools can be carried out normally as before the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

For respondent no.18, the writer has done writing an argumentative essay. However, there were still mistakes in the issue elaboration because the respondent did not get to the point and explained the introduction first such as “Online learning is an alternative learning system recommended ...”, and there was no thesis statement which will be discussed in the next paragraph. Then, the arguments seen in second paragraph was not related to the issue that have been discussed such as “the positive....., and the negative.....”, This was not appropriate the writer failed to provide foundation at the beginning of the introduction that could smoothly in line with the positive and negative arguments or discussion. Last, in conclusion part, again, it was not clear with what the respondent talking about in previous paragraph. Overall, in structural matter, it can be said correct, but in language features was still insufficient. Thus, this argumentative essay was not good.

- *Respondent 4*

Stages	Text
<p><u>Issue</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has analyzed the thesis statement or preview from the essay.</p>	<p>In my opinion, there are many advantages of online learning, for sure we have a lot of free time to do assignments, and also, we can manage time activities according to our wishes, such as rest time, worship, and others.</p>
<p><u>Argument</u> ←</p> <p>In this part, the student has given the argument or point about the topic ‘Online Learning’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The advantages of online learning are also that it will definitely increase our closeness with our families, because we definitely spend more time at home and meet with our families.</li> </ul>



	- Of all the advantages that make us comfortable in online learning, there must also be disadvantages that may make us feel less comfortable. One of them is the limitation of the device, and the task of information when we do distance learning.
<p><u>Conclusion/reiteration</u> ←</p> <p>This text has a conclusion part and suitable with the argument.</p>	Not only that problem that online learning, what often happens is a network problem, because when doing online learning we really need a very good network, so that we can communicate either with teachers or with friends.

From the results of respondent no.4 argumentative writing, there were still errors in writing because it was not in accordance with the existing argumentative writing format or genre. Besides, it can be seen the unclear issues explained such as *"In my opinion, there are many advantages of online learning..."* since it went straight to the point without any introduction and there was no thesis statement. Then, the topic was not in line with the issue that has been made, so there was no relationship between the issue and the topic. Finally, in writing the conclusion, such as *"Not only that problem that online learning..."*, it did not show the results or conclusions described in the issue or topic. In short, this argumentative writing was not good.

To get more information about why 17 students did not write argumentative essay with correct generic structure and sufficient language features, the researchers asked or interviewed them about what factors that make students difficulty in argumentative writing. The responses were presented as follows:

Table 3. Interview Results

No.	Question	Answer
1.	What factors that cause difficulty in writing?	<p>R.1 The factor that makes it difficult for me to write argumentatively is from myself, because the difference between each individual in the level of speaking skills means that it is difficult to speak making it difficult to write.</p> <p>R.3 sometimes I find it difficult to write argumentative in class because the teacher is not clear in explaining the material being taught.</p> <p>R.4 The factor that makes me find it difficult to write is that I do not understand in accepting the knowledge that has been given by the teacher</p> <p>R.5 hard to get ideas for writing</p> <p>R.7 difficult in language selection so that it becomes hampered in writing.</p> <p>R.8 Finding the right words to represent my ideas about the arguments and also my ability of critical thinking is limited, so the arguments not developed well.</p> <p>R.9 The difficulty I face is a lack of concentration, so the arguments I write don't fit the existing structure.</p> <p>R.15 The factor that I face in writing argumentative is the many sources of knowledge that I get about how to write argumentative.</p> <p>R.17 maybe the factors that I experience are not many, it's just that sometimes it's wrong in the language I use. From a structural point of view, I understand a little.</p> <p>R.18 There are too many theoretical factors so I find it difficult to write an argument that fits my opinion which theory is this</p> <p>R.19 The teacher's explanation also affects my understanding, sometimes the teacher is too quick to explain, and I am the type of person who has difficulty understanding things quickly</p> <p>R.20 Of the many theories written. There are still many who do not understand the applied theory</p> <p>R.21 It's hard to write down what's on your mind because of the limited vocabulary that's right</p> <p>R.22 sometimes the teacher is convoluted in delivery, uses language that is not understood and the discussion goes round and round, indirectly the point</p> <p>R.24 Lack of understanding of material for writing arguments, Inappropriate wording when making arguments, Not knowing a lot of meaningful vocabulary, and the more</p>

maturity tests, the more support in making written works

R.27 lack of knowledge related to the topic being discussed

R.30 afraid to write or say something wrong which will offend other people, so the argument won't be written or spoken

Based on the 17 students who were failed in writing argumentative essay with correct generic structure and sufficient language features, it can summarize that there were 3 factors that made them difficult in write perfectly; 1) Students' Factor, 2) Teachers' Factor, and 3) Theories' Factor. The writers believed that the writing errors experienced by students in writing argumentative essays were come mostly from themselves. Herdi (2000), Budjalemba and Listyani (2020), Fareed et al (2016) supported this results by stating that the students' factor was shown by their own laziness to study writing, lack of knowledge, students also worried a lot in writing, lack of a sense of critical thinking.

The next factor comes from the way the teachers teach. Students stated that their difficulty in writing argumentative was influenced also by the way of their teachers informed the material which made them hard to understand and accept the knowledge explained in class. In addition, the explanation was sometimes less detailed or not to the point which makes them more confused. This was supported by arguments from Dhanya and Alamelu (2019), Brown (2000), Klee et al (1986).

The last factor that the researchers found in the interview results was the many theories from experts that made them confused about which theory to use, and how to write it correctly. The researchers believed this could happened since many different scheme of argumentative generic structure and language features existed among experts. This argument was strengthened by Puspita (2019). From the discussion that has been explained, structurally students already understood with argumentative writing, but they just still got mistakes in the use of language features. So, the quality of students in writing can be seen from the factors behind it. It could be believed that 3 factors above gave influenced for students to write, especially writing argumentative essays with correct generic structure and sufficient language features.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, there were found 13 out of 30 students or 43% who were successful in writing argumentative essay according to the Gerot & Wignell (1995) generic structure and language features scheme. However, there were found more students or 17 out of 30 students or 57% who were failed in writing argumentative essay. From the interview results, it can be known that there were 3 main factors such as students' factor, teachers' factor, and theories' factor informed by 17 students who were unsuccessful in writing argumentative essay which made them hard to master argumentative essay. From the conclusions above, the researchers suggest students who are learning or have learned to write argumentative essay to be more serious, fight their laziness in writing, and looking for sources of knowledge from anywhere. Also, for teachers, they can use different way or approach in class so that students can understand and practice more of argumentative. Last, for other researchers, this study can be good reference to apply best strategy, method, media, and etc to teach students' argumentative essay.

#### REFERENCES

- Abbas Zare-ee, S. K. (2013). Undergraduate Argumentative Writing in English as a Foreign Language: a Gendered Perspective. *Journal of Language, Culture, and Translation*, 2(1), 123–145.
- AL-HAQ, F. A., & AHMED, A. S. E. A. (1994). Discourse problems in argumentative writing. *World Englishes*, 13(3), 307–323. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1994.tb00318.x>
- Bazerman, C. (2010). *The Informed Writer: Using Sources in the Disciplines*. 293. [http://www.amazon.com/Informed-Writer-Using-Sources-Disciplines/dp/0395687233/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1431282862&sr=8-1&keywords=informed+writer](http://www.amazon.com/Informed-Writer-Using-Sources-Disciplines/dp/0395687233/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1431282862&sr=8-1&keywords=informed+writer)
- Beittel, M. (2002). Genre and the Language Learning Classroom. *ELT Journal*, 56(4), 426–429. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/56.4.426>
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Longman,

---

Pearson.

- Budjalemba, A. S., & Listyani, L. (2020). Factors contributing to students' difficulties in academic writing class: Students' perceptions. *UC Journal: ELT, Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 1(2), 135–149. <https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v1i2.2966>
- Clark, I. L. (2011). Concepts in Composition: Thoery and Practice in the Teaching of Writing. In *Concepts in Composition*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203806807>
- Coffin, C. (2004). Arguing about how the world is or how the world should be: The role of argument in IELTS tests. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 3(3), 229–246. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2003.11.002>
- Creswell, W. J., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative adn Mixed Methods Approaches. In *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling* (Vol. 53, Issue 9). file:///C:/Users/Harrison/Downloads/John W. Creswell & J. David Creswell - Research Design\_ Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (2018).pdf%0Afile:///C:/Users/Harrison/AppData/Local/Mendeley Ltd./Mendeley Desktop/Downloaded/Creswell, Cr
- Dhanya, M., & Alamelu, C. (2019). Factors influencing the acquisition of writing skills. *International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering*, 8(7C2), 259–263.
- Fareed, M., Ashraf, A., & Bilal, M. (2016). ESL Learners' Writing Skills: Problems, Factors and Suggestions. *Journal of Education & Social Sciences*, 4(2), 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.20547/jess0421604201>
- Gerot, L., & Wignell, P. (1995). M. sense of functional grammar. S. G. S. A. E. E. (n.d.). *Making sense of functional grammar*. Sydney: Gerd Stabler Antipodean Educational Enterprises.
- H.Douglas Brown. (2000). [H\_Douglas\_Brown] Teaching\_by\_Principles\_Second\_(BookFi.org).pdf. In *Teaching by Principles An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (p. 491).
- Herdi, H. (2000). an Analysis on Factors Influencing the Students '. *Journal of Lancang Kuning*, 14(2), 19–22.
- Herman, D. (2009). *Basic Elements of Narrative*. Wiley.
- Husna, A., & Multazim, A. (2019). Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text At Inclusion Classes. *LET: Linguistics, Literature and English Teaching Journal*, 9(1), 52–76. <https://doi.org/10.18592/let.v9i1.3077>
- Ismayanti, E., & Kholiq, A. (2020). An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Descriptive Text. *E-Link Journal*, 7(1), 10–20. <https://doi.org/10.35194/jj.v7i1.534>
- Klee, C. A., Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (1986). Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. In *The Modern Language Journal* (Vol. 70, Issue 4, p. 420). <https://doi.org/10.2307/326829>
- Klimova, B. F. (2012). The Importance of Writing. *Paripex - Indian Journal Of Research*, 2(1), 9–11. <https://doi.org/10.15373/22501991/jan2013/4>
- Koilara, M., Tambuna, F. S., Hutabarat, D. R., & Tarigan, S. N. (2020). Students' Difficulties in Writing Narrative Text. *English Journal of Indagiri*, 4(1), 157–167.
- Komara, C., & Sriyanto, W. (2018). the Effectiveness of Applying Constructive Controversy Method in Gaining Student'S Critical Thinking for Writing Argumentative Essay. *Getsempera English Education Journal (GEEJ)*, 5(2), 177–186.
- Langan, C. M. (2002). *The art of knowing*. Mega Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Mei, W. S. (2006). Creating a contrastive rhetorical stance: Investigating the strategy of problematization in students' argumentation. *RELC Journal*, 37(3), 329–353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071316>
- Nation, I. S. P. (2008). *Teaching esl/efl reading and writing (ESL & applied linguistics professional series)*. Routledge.
-

- Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing Academic English*. Pearson, Longman.
- Puspita, C. (2019). Factors affecting students' difficulties in writing thesis A Mixed-Methods Research at Eighth Semester of English Study Program in IAIN Curup. *3rd English Language and Literature International Conference (ELLiC) Proceedings*, 3, 13–22. <https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/ELLIC/article/view/4683/4210>
- Rahmatunisa, W. (2014). Problems Faced By Indonesian Efl Learners in Writing Argumentative Essay. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 3(1), 1–9. <http://journal.uniku.ac.id/index.php/ERJEE>
- Saputra, A. B. B., Jumariati, & Febriyanti, E. R. (2021). EFL Students' Problems in Writing Argumentative Essays. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Education, Language, Literature, and Arts (ICELLA 2021)*, 587(Icella), 8–12. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211021.002>
- Schaffner, C. (2002). *The Role of Discourse Analysis for Translation and in Translator Training*. Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Schneer, D. (2014). Rethinking the Argumentative Essay. *TESOL Journal*, 5(4), 619–653. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.123>
- Situmorang, M. M. M., Hutabarat, E., Panjaitan, Y., & Sembiring, Y. (2020). Analysis of Students' Problem in Writing Argumentative Texts. *Globish: An English-Indonesian Journal for English, Education, and Culture*, 9(1), 15. <https://doi.org/10.31000/globish.v9i1.2307>
- Turmudi, D. (2020). Investigating The Indonesian Efl Students' Argument in Argumentative Essay. *Premise: Journal of English Education*, 9(2), 251. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v9i2.3079>
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing Writing*. Cambridge University Press.
- Zhang, Y. (2018). An Investigation into the Development of Structure and Evidence Use in Argumentative Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 8(11), 1441. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0811.08>