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Analysis of EFL Learners' Argumentative Writing Using the Adapted Toulmin Model

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The study aims at investigating structural features of EFL university students' argumentative writing using an adapted version of the Toulmin model and to examine the relationship between the overall quality of argumentative writing and the use of adapted Toulmin elements, such as primary claims, primary data, counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data, in terms of their writing proficiency. Based on 46 argumentative papers the participants wrote about the smart phone use, the following findings were obtained: 1) Most of them presented the fundamental Toulmin elements (primary claims and primary dat) in their essays, while fewer used the secondary elements (counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data); 2) there were no significant differences in the use of the fundamental elements between the two writing proficiency groups, whereas there were significant differences in that of the secondary ones; and 3) the relationship between the overall quality of argumentative writing and the use of the elements was not significant for the high-level students, but significant in the fundamental elements for the low-level students and significant in the secondary elements for the participants in total. Discussion and pedagogical implications were addressed.

[argumentative writing/Toulmin model/writing quality]

I. INTRODUCTION

Developing persuasive written arguments has long been recognized as an essential writing skill (Fulkerson, 1996; Németh & Kormos, 2001). Academically, there is a great demand for students, especially at the university level, to comprehend, evaluate, and

construct arguments (Ackerman, 1993; Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Feak & Dobson, 1996; Varghese & Abraham, 1998) because they have to deal with a great number of argumentative papers during their school careers (McCann, 1989). They need to acquire the ability to comprehend and construct written arguments for pursuit of academic achievements (Wolfe, Britt, & Butler, 2009).

It has been reported, however, that many L2 learners experience much more difficulty with English argumentative writing tasks than other writing genres, such as narrative, descriptive, or expository writing (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1980; McCann, 1989). The shortage of their argumentative writing skill results in inadequate and insufficient papers poorly reasoned and developed (Varghese & Abraham, 1998); more specifically, they are not clearly able to state an obvious claim, support their claims with relevant, elaborated data, and organize their writing texts in a coherent fashion (Wolfe & Britt, 2008). This reflects that many of them reveal an unsatisfactory degree of argumentative writing competency (Crammond, 1998).

It is true that research related to argumentative writing has mostly been performed in L1 education contexts in terms of how different writing qualities depend upon levels of writing expertise (Crammond, 1998) and grade levels (Cooper et al., 1984; Crammond, 1998; McCann, 1989), and what kind of relation goal specification has with the use of argument structures and the overall quality of argumentative writing (Ferretti, MacArthur, & Dowdy, 2000; Nussbaum & Kardash, 2005; Page-Voth & Graham, 1999). Also, the research has been conducted at various academic levels, ranging from elementary to college.

Of course, these studies conducted in L1 contexts can surely contribute to understanding the issues in question in L2 contexts. Notwithstanding, more systematic research attention needs to be paid to the analysis of argument structures in L2 learners' argumentative writing, for pedagogical insight obtained from the research would be quite likely to serve as a practical tool for designing instruction materials and classroom activities for argumentative writing (Qin & Karabacak, 2010). Furthermore, it will be ultimately conducive to the improvement of the learners' argumentative writing skill.

The Toulmin model (Toulmin, 1958, 2003) has been widely used as a measure to assess qualities of argumentative writing as well as a teaching tool for the instruction of argumentative structure in English writing classes. It has often been used for the analysis of argumentative papers in L1 settings (Crammond, 1998; Ferretti, MacArthur, & Dowdy, 2000; Nussbaum & Kardash, 2005; Page-Voth & Graham, 1999) and for instructional purposes to teach argumentative structures in L1 and L2 writing (Varghese & Abraham, 1998; Yeh, 1998). As such, these studies using the Toulmin model have mostly been performed in L1 contexts with a few studies performed in L2 setting (Varghese & Abraham, 1998; Yeh, 1998); however, very few have tried to use it to account for the

quality of argumentative writing in L2 contexts, Korean EFL setting in particular.

In this respect, the current exploratory study aims at investigating structural features of EFL university students' argumentative writing using an adapted version of the Toulmin model (1958, 2003) with the argument structures—primary claims, primary data, counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data—and examining the relationship between the overall quality of argumentative writing and the use of Toulmin elements. In addition, the role of the participants' writing proficiency is also addressed in terms of the two purposes mentioned above. To fulfill these purposes, the following research questions were posed:

1. Does the adapted Toulmin model explain the quality of EFL university students' argumentative writing?
2. Are there relationships between the overall quality of EFL university students' argumentative writing and the elements of the adapted Toulmin model?
3. Does EFL university students' writing proficiency play a role in the research questions 1 and 2?

II. STUDIES USING THE TOULMIN MODEL

As a six-part model of argument introduced by British philosopher Stephen Toulmin, the Toulmin model has been used as a tool for developing, analyzing, and categorizing arguments (Toulmin, 1958). Researchers who have special attention to structural features of argumentative prose have mostly incorporated the Toulmin model (Toulmin, 1958, 2003) for their research and instruction. The effectiveness of the Toulmin model to examine the nature of argumentative writing has been proved by some previous studies (Connor, 1990; Connor & Lauer, 1985; McCann, 1989). Moreover, it is firmly grounded in a theory of human argument, coupled with its field-independence quality that allows a variety of adaptation to argumentative discourse (Toulmin, 1958). It has also provoked various models that have been used in the analysis of arguments in discourse (Hays & Brandt, 1992; Hays, Brandt, & Chantry, 1988; Stein & Miller, 1993; Toulmin, Rieke, & Janik, 1979).

The Toulmin model suggests two groups of elements that consist of an argument: the fundamental (or main) elements are claim, data, and warrant, while the secondary (or additional) ones are qualifier, backing, and rebuttal (Crammond, 1998; Qin & Karabacak, 2010; Toulmin, 1958). As for the fundamental elements, the claim is the conclusion, assertion, or opinion of a disputatious argument in response to a problem; the data is supporting evidence, grounds, or premises for the claim; and the warrant provides the

reason that establish the link between data and claim. Unlike the other two elements, the warrant is often implicit or deleted in naturally occurring arguments (Stein & Miller, 1993). Among the secondary elements, the qualifier is a modal term, representing the probability of the claim; the backing provides supports or justification for the warrant; and the reservation (or rebuttal) specifies conditions or circumstances in which the claim would not hold (Toulmin, 1958), or a response to a potential opposing position to a claim (Purdue University Online Writing Lab, 2007; Troyka, 2004). These secondary elements can be used to strengthen the argument.

In argumentative writing research, the Toulmin model shed significant light on the investigation of developmental features across grade levels in terms of the use of the elements in students' argumentative writing (Crammond, 1998; McCann, 1989). With participants of 6th, 8th, and 10th graders (Crammond, 1998) and 6th, 9th, and 12th graders (McCann, 1989) both in L1 settings, the use of Toulmin elements was analyzed in their argumentative essays. These two studies indicated that the use of the elements, such as warrants, counterarguments, rebuttals, and qualifiers, and their overall writing proficiency increased as they grew mature progressively.

Besides, the Toulmin model was used to design instructional strategies, helping students engage in their papers some elements such as claims and data, in order to enhance quality of their argumentative writing (Crowhurst, 1980; Scardamalia & Paris, 1985). The model has also been involved in identifying the features of argumentative texts that account for the quality ratings of writing texts based on the holistic scoring method (Connor, 1990; Connor & Lauer, 1985; Cooper et al., 1984)

Given that research to understand structural features of students' argumentative writing texts using the (adapted) Toulmin model has been mostly conducted in L1 contexts, Qin and Karabacak (2010) attempted to analyze the Toulmin elements of argumentative papers written by 133 Chinese EFL university students. The researchers reported the findings that the participants used at least one claim and four data to support the claim, while they used far less frequently counterargument claims, counterargument data, rebuttal claims, and rebuttal data. Interestingly, the less frequently used elements assumed significant predictive power for the overall quality of argumentative writing.

In Korean context, however, Paek and Kang (2017) reported a bit different results from Qin and Karabacak's (2010) based on the study to identify the quality of argument features in 33 Korean high school EFL learners' argumentative writing. They found that the fundamental elements in the Toulmin model had more accountability than the secondary ones for the learners' overall writing quality and that among Toulmin elements, data was the significant predictor of the participants' argumentative writing proficiency.

As such, while absolute majority of argumentative writing studies were conducted in L1 contexts, quite a few were found to expand the boundary of argumentative writing research

into L2/EFL contexts. Unfortunately, the studies performed in EFL settings failed to reveal any consensus in the relationship between the use of Toulmin elements and the overall quality of EFL learners' argumentative writing. Accordingly, more research is required for better, deeper understanding of L2/EFL learners' argumentative writing that can provide more convincing evidence for the issue in question and that can suggest pedagogical implications to design effective strategies for the development of L2/EFL learners' argumentative writing skill.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

For the study, the argumentative writing samples were collected from 46 EFL college freshmen who enrolled in a compulsory English course—42 males (91.0%) and 4 females (9.0%). Before they were asked to write an argumentative paper, a brief survey was administered to get the participants' personal information including their TOEIC scores in order to ascertain their general English proficiency: the average TOEIC score was 768 ranging from 430 to 980, which means they were approximately at an intermediate-high level.

In addition, to address the role of EFL learners' argumentative writing level in the issues in question, one of the factors that draw argumentative writing researchers' strong interest (Cooper et al., 1984; Paek & Kang, 2017), the participants were classified into two groups—high and low—based on the overall quality of their argumentative papers using a 5-point scale scoring rubric. The two groups were composed of 20 high-level students (43.5%) who scored 4 and 5 with an average of 4.45 and 26 low-level students (56.5%) who scored from 2 to 3.5 with an average of 2.77.

2. Writing Task

All 46 students were asked to write an argumentative essay in English based on the following prompt: "Nowadays smart phones are indispensable in our lives. Some people think smart phones bring us much convenience, while others argue they make serious trouble. Which opinion do you agree on? Take one position and write an essay to persuade an audience to agree with you." They were encouraged to use their personal experiences or background knowledge related to the topic in order to support their argument. They were not allowed to use any resources including a dictionary. They were given 40 minutes to complete writing an argumentative essay.

3. Coding and Scoring

In this study, the participants' essays were coded using argument categories following Nussbaum and Kardash (2005) and Qin and Karabacak (2010) adapted from the Toulmin model (Toulmin, 1958, 2003). First, the participants had to choose one position on the issue of smart phone use, which was named as the *final claim*. Then the reasons they presented to back up the final claim were termed as *primary claims*. These primary claims were mostly supported by some reasons, called *primary data*. If they provide any possible opposing views to one of the claims, these views were termed as *counterclaims*; and the counterclaims could be supported by *counterclaim data*. Finally, they could also present any *rebuttals* that are responses to the possible opposing views (i.e. counterclaims) to one of the claims along with *rebuttal data* to support their rebuttals. Three elements of warrant, backing, and qualifier from the Toulmin model were not included in the present study because the elements hardly took place in the participants' essays. The seven elements adopted from the Toulmin model are presented in Table 1. The example sentence in each element was chosen from one participant's essay with some linguistic revisions.

TABLE 1

The Adapted Toulmin Elements Used in This Study

	Elements	Description
	Final claim	A position or opinion on whether smart phone use is beneficial or harmful in our lives (e.g., I think conveniences of using smart phones are bigger than troubles.)
Fundamental	Primary claim	A claim that backs up the final claim (e.g., Smart phones have brought a different world for communication.)
	Primary data	Evidence that supports a primary claim, such as facts, anecdotes, research studies, analogies, logical explanations, etc. (e.g., Social Network Service was invented and we can easily contact a lot of people at one time with no expense.)
Secondary	Counterclaim	A claim that gives an opposing view to another claim or the final claim (e.g., Of course, smart phones could be harmful; everything has its drawbacks and so do smart phones.)
	Counterclaim data	Evidence that supports a counterclaim (e.g., There could be an addiction problem, an information theft problem, and so on.)
	Rebuttal	A claim that disproves a counterclaim by indicating the counterclaim is invalid or lacks correctness (e.g., However, I believe that these problems are minor ones compared to the benefits of smart phones.)
	Rebuttal data	Evidence that supports a rebuttal (e.g., If it were not for smart phones, we could not enjoy our lives as we do now and technology could have not been improved this much.)

The overall quality of the participants' argumentative essays was assessed on a 5-point scale scoring rubric based on Ferretti et al. (2000), Nussbaum and Kardash (2005),

McCann (1989), and Qin & Karabacak (2010). The scoring rubric was developed to judge the effectiveness of an argument writing to persuade an audience about the controversial issue of smart phone use, with the criteria of clear statement of primary claims, counter claims, and rebuttals with appropriate and elaborated data for each claim, and overall organization. The scoring rubric is presented in Appendix.

To enhance coding and scoring reliability, two experienced English writing instructors participated in the coding process of the adapted Toulmin elements and the scoring process of the overall quality of argument essays. After having themselves familiarized with the seven argument categories in Table 1 and the holistic scoring rubric for argument essays in Appendix with some discussion, they were engaged in coding and scoring independently, not being allowed to communicate. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cronbach α: 1.000 for the final claim .867 for primary claims, .993 for primary data, .838 for counterclaims, .800 for counterclaim data, .880 for rebuttals, .968 for rebuttal data, and .912 for the quality of essays. The frequency scores from coding the elements and the holistic scores for overall quality of each essay were tallied. The reliability proved to be quite high, which safely permits further analyses. The final scores submitted to statistical analysis were the average of the two raters.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive analyses were carried out as in Table 2 to investigate how the Toulmin model with the six adapted elements explain the participants' argumentative writing quality. The final claim was not included in further analysis because taking a position on the issue of smart phone use was an obligation to write the argumentative essay based on the prompt, though two out of 46 participants failed to clarify the final claim.

TABLE 2

Descriptive Statistics of Toulmin Elements in English Argumentative Writing

Toulmin elements	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Primary claims	1	5	2.64	.91
Primary data	0	7	2.79	1.37
Counterclaims	0	3	.85	.84
Counterarclaim data	0	2	.30	.43
Rebuttals	0	2	.59	.67
Rebuttal data	0	2	.29	.54
Overall quality of writing	2	5	3.50	1.00

On average, the participants presented at least two primary claims related to one final claim—whether smart phones bring us convenience or make trouble—and at least two

primary data; however, they used less than one counterclaim, counterclaim data, rebuttal, and rebuttal data in their essays. Four out of 46 participants failed to present primary claims, primary data, or both, whereas the other 42 participants had at least two primary claims and relevant primary data. Considering a claim and its data are the fundamental elements of an argument structure, the majority of them appears to clearly understand how argument writing is organized with the basic elements. It can be safely said that students are well aware of the importance of engaging the basic structure of argument, such as (primary) claims and (primary) data in their argument papers (Cooper et al., 1984; Crammond, 1998; Qin & Karabacak, 2010).

When it comes to the use of counterclaims and counterclaim data, 24 out of 46 participants used counterclaims to refute the final claim or primary claims, and only 6 presented counterclaim data to back up the counterclaims. Concerning the use of rebuttals and rebuttal data, 23 participants used rebuttals to refute counterclaims, and only 8 of them presented rebuttal data to support the rebuttals. Such finding of the present study that the participants used much fewer secondary Toulmin elements, such as counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data, corroborates Cooper et al.'s (1984) and Qin and Karabacak's (2010) results. The argument texts of American university freshmen for the former study and those of Chinese EFL university students for the latter study lacked well-developed elaboration in constructing an argumentative structure in their papers that is one of the crucial features found in expert writers' argumentative texts.

Unlike most of the participants presented the two fundamental Toulmin elements of an argument structure, such as primary claims and primary data, in their writing, many of them failed to do so with the secondary elements, such as counterclaims and rebuttals. Even though the elements are believed to be secondary or optional features in argument writing, so they can be often omitted in accordance with the complexity of argument structure, effective uses of them can be a reliable measure of expertise in argument writing (Crammond, 1998; McCann, 1989; Qin & Karabacak, 2010). The insufficient use of the elements is probably because it takes high cognitive load to use them (Coirier, Andriessen, & Chanquoy, 1999) and because students' argument writing proficiency need to be further developed to some degree in which they can perceive appropriate use of them as an important tool to increase persuasiveness of their arguments (Nussbaum & Kardash, 2005).

Independent t-tests were performed to confirm if there are any differences in the use of the six Toulmin elements between the two argumentative writing proficiency groups as in Table 3. First, in general, high-level students used the six elements more frequently than the low-level ones. Interestingly, however, the two fundamental elements, such as primary claims and primary data, failed to reach significant differences between the groups, while high-level students used the secondary elements, such as counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data, more frequently than their counterparts.

Compared to high-level students, low-level students had difficulty in the use of the secondary elements in their argumentative papers, which might result in poorer quality of argument writing as shown in Table 3. Given that the effective use of the secondary elements in argumentative writing can enhance persuasiveness of arguments, the low-level students need to be trained and practiced to address arguments with the secondary elements contrary to their own positions (Cooper et al., 1984; Wolfe & Britt, 2008; Wolfe et al., 2009; Qin & Karabacak, 2010).

TABLE 3

Differences in the Use of Toulmin Elements in English Argumentative Writing According to the Participants' Writing Proficiency

Toulmin elements	Level	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Primary claims	High	2.84	.83	1.26	.21
	Low	2.50	.95		
Primary data	High	3.05	1.39	1.08	.29
	Low	2.61	1.34		
Counterclaims	High	1.13	.81	1.98	.05*
	Low	.65	.82		
Counterclaim data	High	.47	.46	2.36	.02*
	Low	.16	.37		
Rebuttals	High	.82	.82	2.01	.05*
	Low	.43	.64		
Rebuttal data	High	.50	.69	2.04	.05*
	Low	.15	.36		

*$p < .05$

To ascertain the relationship between the overall quality of English argumentative writing and the use of the six adapted Toulmin elements, Pearson Product Moment Correlations were administered as in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Correlations between Toulmin Elements and Overall Quality of Writing

	Level	PC	PD	C	CD	R	RD
Overall quality of writing	High	.24	.24	.17	.06	-.08	.13
	Low	.40*	.51**	-.12	-.07	-.08	-.18
	Total	.16	.19	.28*	.34*	.32*	.32*

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Note. PC: primary claims, PD: primary data, C: counterclaims, CD: counterclaim data, R: rebuttals, RD: rebuttal data

As for high-level students, no significant correlations were found between the variables, whereas low-level students revealed significant positive correlations between

the two fundamental elements and the overall quality of argument writing. It is understandable that overall quality of high-level students' essay writings did not show any relation with a specific element probably because they are well versed in what is argumentative prose and how to write it using appropriate argument structures including counterclaims and rebuttals, and because they have internalized the features in arguments through the influence of formal writing instruction followed by practice (Hinkel, 2011; Lee & Yoon, 2017). On the other hand, as for the low-level students, the more frequently they use the fundamental elements (primary claims and primary data), the higher scores they got in overall quality of writing. This suggests that low-level students may not be good at presenting the fundamental elements, so they first need to acquire ability to comprehend and construct written arguments using primary claims and primary data before putting their efforts to address other-side information to strengthen quality of arguments.

Next, the correlation analysis of the participants in total found that the overall quality of English argumentative papers did not show any relationship with the fundamental elements, primary claims and primary data, whereas it was significantly positively correlated with the secondary elements, such as counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data (Qin & Karabacak, 2010). It is quite understandable that the two fundamental elements (primary claims and primary data) failed to reveal any significant relationship with the overall quality of writing possibly because almost all of the participants were fully aware of the effect of using the fundamental elements to develop argument structures in their essays as mentioned elsewhere related to Table 2.

As for the secondary elements, significant relationships were found between the overall quality of writing and the four elements, such as counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data. The use of the four secondary elements appears to play an essential role in the enhancement of persuasiveness in their arguments (Qin & Karabacak, 2010; Wolfe & Britt, 2008). This finding goes well with the studies related to the effect of goal specification on the use of elements of argument structures and the overall quality of argumentative writing (Ferretti et al., 2000; Nussbaum & Kardash, 2005; Page-Voth & Graham, 1999). In those studies, the students in the goal specification group(s), with the demand of including the secondary elements in their argumentative papers, got higher scores in the overall rating of their papers than the control group or the general goal group. It can be assured to address that the quality of argument in argumentative papers hinges largely on the presence of the secondary Toulmin elements since texts strewn appropriately with counterclaims and rebuttals are considered more persuasive (O'Keefe, 1999).

V. CONCLUSION

The purposes of the current study was to investigate structural features of EFL university students' argumentative writing using an adapted version of the Toulmin model and to examine the relationship between the overall quality of argumentative writing and the use of adapted Toulmin elements. In addition, the role of the participants' writing proficiency was also considered in terms of the two research purposes. On the basis of 46 college students' argumentative writing samples, the following findings were obtained.

First, most of the participants presented primary claims related to one final claim and primary data in their essays. Considering a claim and its data are the fundamental elements of an argument structure, the majority of them appear to clearly understand how argument writing is organized with the basic elements (Cooper et al., 1984; Crammond, 1998; Qin & Karabacak, 2010). On the other hand, fewer used counterclaim, counterclaim data, rebuttal, and rebuttal data in their essays. It suggests that they lack well-developed elaboration in constructing an argumentative structure in their papers, one of the crucial features found in expert writers' argumentative texts (Cooper et al., 1984; Qin & Karabacak, 2010).

Next, regarding the differences in the use of Toulmin elements between the two argumentative writing proficiency groups, the two groups failed to show any significant differences in the use of the fundamental elementals (primary claims and primary data), while there were significant differences in that of the secondary ones (counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals, and rebuttal data), favoring high-level students' more frequent use of them. Given that the effective use of the secondary elements in argumentative writing can enhance persuasiveness of arguments, the low-level students need to be trained and practiced to address arguments with the secondary elements contrary to their own positions (Cooper et al., 1984; Wolfe & Britt, 2008; Wolfe et al., 2009; Qin & Karabacak, 2010).

Finally, the relationship between the overall quality of English argumentative writing and the use of the adapted Toulmin elements was not significant for the high-level students, significant in the fundamental elements for the low-level ones, and significant in the secondary elements for the participants in total. Generally speaking, most of the participants were fully aware of the effect of using the fundamental elements to develop argument structures in their essays, with the exception of some low-level students, and the secondary elements play a crucial role to discriminate high level from low level in the ability of constructing persuasive arguments in argumentative writing (Qin & Karabacak, 2010; Wolfe & Britt, 2008).

A few pedagogical implication can be drawn from the findings. First, most of the participants presented the two fundamental elements in their argumentative essays, but low-level students' overall quality of writing had significant relation to the use of

fundamental Toulmin elements. It signifies that the lower the students' argumentative writing proficiency, the less frequently they use the two fundamental elements. Accordingly, the writing instructors have to diagnose whether L2 learners know the basic structure of argument with claims and data, and then focus first on having them familiar with setting up claims and data to support their final opinion. Second, when considering the use of the second elements was proven to be a measure to differentiate between high- and low-level argumentative writers, the writing instructors have another responsibility that they need to improve the learners' awareness of the secondary Toulmin elements and help them use the elements providing some training in order to enhance their effective persuasive skill in argumentative writing.

The present study attempted to understand how EFL learners construct arguments in their argumentative papers using the adapted Toulmin model and to expand the applicability of the Toulmin model to L2/EFL settings, Korean EFL setting in particular. Since this study was an explorative attempt to address the issue in question, more research with a comprehensive approach is required in terms of the number of participants, their level of argumentative writing proficiency, elaborated application of the research tool of Toulmin elements such as types of data and relevance of evidence to claims, and the participants' perception of using the model in their argumentative writing process (Brem & Rips, 2000; Paek & Kang, 2017; Qin & Karabacak, 2010). Lastly, research related to EFL setting is urgently required regarding the effectiveness of instruction of argumentative writing using the Toulmin model that has been confirmed as an effective heuristic tool in L1 and L2 contexts (Varghese & Abraham, 1998; Yeh, 1998), ultimately to enhance persuasiveness in EFL learners' argumentative papers.

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APPENDIX

A Holistic Scoring Rubric for Argument Writing

Scale	Description
1	Undeveloped argument: The paper states an argument with no reasons or unrelated reasons to the opinion; and the paper is not coherent and properly organized in general.
2	Minimally developed argument: The paper states a minimally acceptable argument with one or two reasons to support it, but the reasons are not related to the opinion. The organization is weak and inconsistencies are present.
3	Partially developed argument: The paper states a clearly recognizable argument with one or two good reasons to support it, but the reasons are generally plausible while sometimes inconsistent. The organization is not fully developed.
4	Well developed argument: The paper states a reasonably persuasive argument with reasons clearly explained and elaborated, but not enough. There may be a few inconsistent or irrelevant information. The paper may raise some opposing opinions without refuting them or with ineffective refutation. The essay is generally well organized
5	Perfectly developed argument: The paper states an excellent persuasive argument with good and sufficient reasons to support it. The paper may raise some good opposing opinions with appropriate refutation, which is optional, though. The essay is well organized with clear and well-elaborated information.

Examples in: English

Applicable Language: English

Applicable Level: Tertiary

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