



<https://jurnal.unigal.ac.id/index.php/jall/index>

JALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy), ISSN 2598-8530, February, Vol. 10 No. 1, 2026

Received: January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Accepted: February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Published February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026

## Cultural and Gender Variation in Argumentative Coherence: A Corpus-Based Study of Indonesian and Japanese EFL Learners

**Bambang Ruby Sugiarto**

*Universitas Galuh, Ciamis, Indonesia*

[bambangrubys@unigal.ac.id](mailto:bambangrubys@unigal.ac.id)

### Abstract

*This study examines how cultural background and gender relate to argumentative coherence in English writing among Indonesian and Japanese EFL learners. Although intercultural rhetoric research has explored cross-cultural variation in argumentative structure, limited corpus-based studies have compared learners at controlled proficiency levels using a structured analytical framework. Drawing on 20 B1\_2-level essays from the ICNALE corpus, this study applies the Toulmin Argument Pattern (TAP) framework to analyze the distribution of claims, data, counterclaims, and rebuttals. Argumentative quality was further assessed using an adapted coherence-level scale. The findings reveal clear cross-cultural variation: Indonesian learners produced a higher frequency of claims and supporting data, reflecting a predominantly linear argumentative structure, whereas Japanese learners more frequently incorporated counterclaims and rebuttals, resulting in more structurally complete argumentative cycles. Gender-related differences were observed in the distribution of argumentative elements; however, these patterns should be interpreted cautiously due to the exploratory sample size. Overall, the study highlights the role of culturally shaped rhetorical preferences in EFL argumentative writing and demonstrates the usefulness of TAP as a diagnostic tool for examining intercultural variation in coherence. Pedagogical implications and directions for future research are discussed.*

**Keywords:** Argumentative Writing; Cultures and Genders; Text Coherence

### Introduction

Argumentative writing is widely recognized as one of the most demanding genres in second language (L2) academic contexts. It requires writers not only to present a clear position but also to develop logical reasoning, engage with alternative viewpoints, and organize ideas coherently. For learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), constructing coherent argumentative texts presents particular challenges, as rhetorical conventions in English may differ from those shaped by learners' first language (L1) and cultural backgrounds. Consequently, intercultural differences in argumentative structure have been a longstanding concern in writing research. Kaplan's (1966) foundational work in contrastive rhetoric first highlighted how cultural and linguistic backgrounds influence the organization of L2 writing. Since then, research has continued to demonstrate that rhetorical preferences and textual

organization vary across cultural contexts. For example, studies in Japanese EFL contexts have shown differences in genre awareness, rhetorical structure, and writing self-efficacy (Elwood & Bode, 2014; Nagao, 2018). Similarly, research in Indonesian settings has identified variation in linguistic processes and emotional expression across male and female learners (Hadiyati et al., 2018; Nasita et al., 2020). These studies suggest that both cultural background and gender may shape how learner structure and express ideas in writing.

However, while previous research has examined linguistic processes, emotional expression, and genre awareness, fewer studies have systematically analyzed how cultural and gender differences relate specifically to argumentative coherence. Coherence, understood as the logical and meaningful connection among textual elements, is considered a fundamental property of effective writing. Halliday and Hasan (2014) describe coherence as a relational dependency within discourse, whereby interpretation of one element relies on its connection to another. More recent scholarship emphasizes that coherence is not universal but culturally shaped. For example, Pena (2021) argues that Western traditions often conceptualize coherence as a standard of logical textual unity, whereas other traditions may view coherence as emerging from holistic authorial control. These differences suggest that what counts as “coherent” argumentative writing may vary across cultural contexts.

Despite increasing attention to intercultural rhetoric and gender-related variation in writing, there remains limited corpus-based research that compares Indonesian and Japanese EFL learners at equivalent proficiency levels using a structured analytical framework for argumentation. Moreover, prior studies have rarely integrated cultural and gender variables simultaneously when examining argumentative structure. This gap is particularly significant given the pedagogical importance of argumentative writing in EFL classrooms and the need for systematic tools to evaluate argumentative coherence. To address this gap, the present study adopts the Toulmin Argument Pattern (TAP) framework as operationalized by Qin and Karabacak (2010). TAP provides a structured model for analyzing argument components, including claims, data, counterclaims, and rebuttals. By applying TAP to a controlled subset of the ICNALE corpus at the B1\_2 proficiency level, this study aims to compare how Indonesian and Japanese male and female learners construct argumentative texts and to examine how these structures relate to argumentative quality.

Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What elements of argumentative structure occur in Indonesian and Japanese male and female learners’ argumentative writing?
2. What is the overall quality of their argumentative writing as measured through TAP-based analysis?
3. Do male and female learners demonstrate similar or different patterns in argumentative structure and quality across the two cultural contexts?

Through a corpus-based comparative analysis, this study seeks to contribute to intercultural rhetoric research by clarifying how cultural and gender variables relate to argumentative coherence in EFL writing.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptualizing Coherence in Academic Writing**

Coherence is widely regarded as a defining characteristic of effective academic writing. Unlike cohesion, which concerns explicit linguistic markers such as conjunctions and lexical repetition, coherence refers to the logical and meaningful organization of ideas within a text. Halliday and Hasan (2014) conceptualize coherence as the relational dependency among textual elements, whereby interpretation of one unit depends upon its connection to another. From this perspective, coherence is not merely the presence of cohesive devices but the structured interdependence of propositions within discourse.

In argumentative writing, coherence is closely linked to logical progression and justification. Toulmin's (2003) model of argumentation provides a structural lens for examining coherence at the level of reasoning. According to Toulmin, a claim must be supported by relevant data and, where appropriate, counterclaims and rebuttals to form a complete argument. Without such support, a claim risks being interpreted as a personal opinion rather than a defensible position. Within this framework, coherence emerges from the logical alignment between claims and supporting evidence, as well as from the structured negotiation of opposing viewpoints.

Empirical research has shown that EFL learners often struggle with constructing coherent argumentative texts. Cekiso et al. (2016) found that students encounter difficulties in organizing thesis statements, topic sentences, and supporting details, which directly affect textual coherence. Similarly, RahmtAllah (2020) reported that Saudi EFL learners demonstrated limited ability to maintain coherence across essay sections. At the discourse level, Al-Khazraji (2019) identified inconsistent use of discourse markers, which disrupted the logical flow of ideas despite the presence of inferential and contrastive connectors. Chang et al. (2019) further noted weaknesses in learners' use of referential cohesion, including pronoun substitution and conjunction use, while Tshotsho (2014) observed that less proficient writers struggled with thematic progression, reducing logical consistency.

While these studies highlight linguistic and structural dimensions of coherence, they primarily focus on cohesive devices rather than argumentative reasoning. Toulmin's framework, by contrast, allows coherence to be examined through the distribution and interaction of argumentative components. This structural perspective is particularly relevant for analyzing argumentative essays, where coherence depends on how claims, evidence, counterclaims, and rebuttals are organized into a meaningful progression. Moreover, coherence is not a culturally neutral construct. Pena (2021) suggests that Western academic traditions often conceptualize coherence as logical

unity governed by explicit reasoning, whereas other traditions may emphasize holistic textual harmony. Such variation implies that expectations of coherence in English argumentative writing may reflect culturally specific norms of reasoning and organization.

### **Cultural Influences on Argumentative Structure**

The influence of cultural background on L2 writing has been extensively discussed within contrastive and intercultural rhetoric traditions. Early work in this field suggested that rhetorical organization patterns differ across cultures, influencing how learners structure English texts. Contemporary research continues to explore how cultural conventions shape argumentative reasoning and textual organization. In Japanese EFL contexts, studies have demonstrated that genre awareness and structured instruction can enhance students' understanding of argumentative organization. Nagao (2018) found that a genre-based teaching approach improved learners' control of generic structure and interpersonal meaning in argumentative essays. Similarly, Elwood and Bode (2014) reported differences in classroom preferences and anxiety levels between male and female Japanese students, suggesting that sociocultural factors may indirectly affect writing practices. Research in Indonesian contexts has also highlighted variation in discourse features. Hadiyati et al. (2018) observed that Indonesian male students frequently employed material processes in critical response writing, indicating differences in experiential meaning construction. Nasita et al. (2020) reported that female Indonesian students exhibited greater emotional expressiveness in personal letters, suggesting variation in rhetorical style across gender groups.

While these studies indicate that cultural and gender backgrounds influence discourse choices, they often focus on linguistic processes, emotional expression, or classroom interaction rather than on argumentative coherence itself. Few studies have systematically examined how cultural background affects the structural organization of claims and counterclaims within a controlled proficiency level.

### **Gender and Argumentative Writing**

Gender-related variation in writing has been examined from linguistic, sociocultural, and pedagogical perspectives. Tsemach and Zohar (2021) found that students' approaches to reasoning and argumentation may vary across gender and cultural contexts. However, findings across studies are not uniform, and many differences appear context-dependent rather than universal.

Some research suggests that male and female learners may differ in rhetorical emphasis or expressive style (Hadiyati et al., 2018; Nasita et al., 2020), while other studies emphasize the role of instructional context and feedback in shaping argumentative performance. For example, Latifi et al. (2021) demonstrated that structured peer feedback significantly improved the quality of argumentative reasoning, suggesting that pedagogical intervention may outweigh inherent gender differences.

Overall, existing research indicates that both culture and gender can influence aspects of L2 writing, yet there remains limited corpus-based investigation of how

these variables interact in shaping argumentative coherence at equivalent proficiency levels. Furthermore, prior studies rarely integrate cultural and gender comparisons within a single structured argumentation framework.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study adopts a corpus-based comparative research design to examine how cultural background and gender relate to argumentative coherence in English writing. The analysis is based on a controlled subset of the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English (ICNALE; Ishikawa, 2013), which provides standardized argumentative essays produced by learners across multiple Asian contexts. A corpus-based design was selected to ensure consistency in writing prompts, proficiency levels, and testing conditions, thereby enhancing comparability across groups.

### **Corpus and Participants**

The dataset was drawn from the written sub-corpus of ICNALE. ICNALE classifies learners into six proficiency levels according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), based on TOEIC or TOEFL performance. To control for proficiency-related variation, this study focused exclusively on the B1\_2 level, which represents intermediate learners capable of producing structured argumentative texts. A total of 20 essays were selected: 5 Indonesian males, 5 Indonesian females, 5 Japanese males, 5 Japanese females. The selection was restricted to essays responding to the same prompt (“Should smoking be completely banned at restaurants?”) to ensure topical consistency. Using a single prompt reduces topic-related variation and allows the analysis to focus specifically on argumentative structure rather than content familiarity. Although the sample size is modest, it allows detailed qualitative coding of argument structures while maintaining cross-group comparability. The study is therefore positioned as an exploratory corpus-based comparison rather than a large-scale statistical generalization.

### **Analytical Framework**

Argumentative structure was analyzed using the Toulmin Argument Pattern (TAP) framework as operationalized by Qin and Karabacak (2010). The TAP model identifies the following core argumentative components: Claim, Data (Grounds), Counterclaim, Counterclaim Data, Rebuttal, and Rebuttal Data. A statement was coded as a *claim* only when it was supported by at least one corresponding data element. Unsupported opinions were not classified as valid claims. Each essay was segmented into argumentative units at the clause or sentence level to identify TAP components systematically. To assess argumentative quality, the study adopted the analytical scale developed by Osborne, Erduran, and Simon (2004), which categorizes arguments into hierarchical levels based on the presence and interaction of multiple argumentative elements (e.g., claim-only structures vs. claim-counterclaim-rebuttal cycles). This

framework enables coherence to be examined structurally through the organization of argumentative components.

All essays were manually coded for TAP elements. The coding process followed three stages: Initial identification of claims and supporting data, Identification of counterclaims and rebuttals, and Verification of argumentative cycles and assignment of coherence level. To enhance reliability, coding guidelines were established prior to analysis, based on Qin and Karabacak's (2010) operational definitions. Ambiguous cases were re-examined to ensure consistency in classification. While the study does not employ inferential statistics due to the limited sample size, systematic coding procedures were applied uniformly across all texts to maintain analytical rigor.

To address Research Question 1, frequency distributions were calculated to determine the occurrence of each TAP component across cultural and gender groups. Raw frequencies were compared descriptively to identify structural tendencies. To address Research Question 2, argumentative quality levels were assigned to each essay based on the Osborne et al. (2004) framework. Average levels were then calculated for each group. To address Research Question 3, cross-cultural and gender comparisons were conducted descriptively by examining differences in TAP distribution patterns and coherence levels. Given the exploratory nature of the dataset, comparisons are interpreted cautiously and without inferential statistical testing.

## Findings and Discussion

### Distribution of Argumentative Components

Findings of Cumulative frequency distribution of TAP components and levels among Indonesian and Japanese EFL learners are shown in the following tables.

**Table 1.** The quantity of Indonesian Male TAP components

Participants	Claim	Claim Data	Counter-Claim	Counter-Claim Data	Rebuttal	Rebuttal Data	Level
IM1	1	9	0	0	0	0	2
IM 2	1	19	0	0	0	0	2
IM 3	1	11	0	0	0	0	2
IM 4	1	7	1	3	1	3	3
IM 5	2	6	0	0	0	0	2
Total/Avg	6	52	1	3	1	3	2.2

**Table 2.** The quantity of Indonesian Female TAP components

Participants	Claim	Claim Data	Counter-Claim	Counter-Claim Data	Rebuttal	Rebuttal Data	Level
IF1	1	18	0	0	0	0	2
IF2	3	12	2	3	1	1	3
IF3	3	3	1	8	0	0	2

IF4	3	5	1	0	1	7	3
IF5	3	21	1	0	0	0	2
Total/Avg	13	59	5	11	2	8	2.4

**Table 3.** The quantity of Japanese Male TAP components

Participants	Claim	Claim Data	Counter-Claim	Counter-Claim Data	Rebuttal	Rebuttal Data	Level
JM1	3	7	2	0	1	1	3
JM2	3	4	3	2	2	3	5
JM3	2	4	1	0	1	4	3
JM4	2	3	1	8	1	2	3
JM5	1	6	1	3	0	0	2
Total/Avg	11	24	8	13	5	10	3.2

**Table 4.** The quantity of Japanese Female TAP components

Participants	Claim	Claim Data	Counter-Claim	Counter-Claim Data	Rebuttal	Rebuttal Data	Level
JF1	1	2	1	0	1	9	3
JF2	1	7	1	1	1	7	4
JF3	1	11	0	0	0	0	2
JF4	1	11	0	0	0	0	2
JF5	1	4	1	5	1	3	4
Total/Avg	5	35	3	5	3	19	3

Table 1 & 2 shows that Indonesian learners produced a relatively high number of claims and supporting data across both gender groups. The dominant pattern observed was a linear structure consisting primarily of claim and Supporting Data. Counterclaims and rebuttals appeared less frequently. Only a limited number of Indonesian essays included extended counter-argumentation cycles involving counterclaim data and rebuttal data. When present, counterclaims were often brief and not fully elaborated with supporting justification. Female Indonesian learners demonstrated slightly higher frequencies of claim data compared to male learners, suggesting more elaborated support for primary claims. However, the overall structural tendency remained similar across genders. Table 3 & 4 shows that Japanese learners displayed a broader distribution of TAP components. In addition to claims and supporting data, counterclaims and rebuttals appeared more frequently across essays. A recurring structural pattern was Claim, Data, Counterclaim, and Rebuttal. This pattern indicates a more dialogic argumentative structure, in which opposing viewpoints are acknowledged and responded to within the essay. Japanese male learners showed a relatively consistent inclusion of counterclaims and rebuttals across texts. Japanese female learners also incorporated counter-argumentative elements, although the distribution varied between essays.

## Quality of Argumentative Structure

Most Indonesian essays were categorized within Level 2–3 of the argumentation quality scale. These levels correspond to Presence of claims supported by data, and Limited or inconsistent inclusion of counterclaims. Fully developed argumentative cycles involving multiple counterclaims and rebuttals were comparatively rare. Japanese essays more frequently reached Level 3–4 on the coherence scale. These levels are characterized by Inclusion of counterclaims, Integration of rebuttals, and Structured negotiation of opposing viewpoints. This distribution suggests that Japanese learners more consistently constructed multi-layered argumentative structures. When average coherence levels were compared descriptively, Japanese learners demonstrated higher overall structural complexity than Indonesian learners. This difference reflects the more frequent inclusion of counter-argumentative components rather than differences in basic claim formation.

## Argumentation across Different Genders and Cultures

Across the dataset, Indonesian learners regardless of gender primarily constructed arguments centered on claims supported by data. Counterclaims and rebuttals appeared infrequently and were often minimally elaborated. In contrast, Japanese learners more consistently incorporated extended argumentative cycles, including counterclaims and rebuttals supported by data. This pattern suggests greater structural negotiation of opposing viewpoints in the Japanese subgroup. These findings resonate with Kaplan's (1966) observation that rhetorical organization is culturally shaped rather than universal. While Kaplan's early contrastive rhetoric model has been widely debated, the present data suggest that argumentative structuring at the B1\_2 level may reflect culturally influenced preferences in how positions are developed and negotiated.

Within the Indonesian subgroup, female learners demonstrated slightly higher average coherence levels than male learners based on the TAP-based scale. However, both genders predominantly relied on linear claim–data structures. For example, IM4 constructed an argument that included a claim followed by supporting justification and a brief counterpoint:

*“I agree that smoking must be completely banned... But, prevent someone from smoking is not fair too... I read from many media that passive smokers is really dangerous...”*

This excerpt illustrates a primary claim supported by data, with limited development of the counterargument. The structure remains largely linear despite the acknowledgment of an alternative perspective.

In contrast, IF2 emphasized situational and experiential elements:

*“Restaurants are places where people enjoy... They all come in a very good mood... they feel annoyed with the smoke...”*

Here, the argument relies more on experiential justification and affective framing rather than structured counter-argumentation. However, it is important to note that both male and female Indonesian learners showed similar structural tendencies overall, and the observed variation appears gradual rather than categorical.

In the Japanese subgroup, male learners achieved slightly higher average coherence levels than female learners. Japanese male essays more consistently integrated counterclaims and rebuttals within the argumentative cycle. For instance, JM2 structured the argument by acknowledging opposing views before articulating a final position:

*“Many says the smoke from the cigarette harm other people... However... we shouldn't make rules easily... So I disagree...”*

This excerpt reflects a multi-step argumentative sequence, including recognition of counterarguments and subsequent rebuttal.

Similarly, JF1 constructed an argument grounded in experiential reasoning:

*“Someone don't like cigarette smoke... I want to prohibit smoking... I like eating delicious dishes...”*

Although counter-argumentation was less developed in this example, the structure remains organized around a clear stance supported by contextual justification.

While the excerpts suggest that male participants in both cultural groups incorporated counter-argumentative elements slightly more frequently, and female participants occasionally relied more on experiential framing, these patterns should be interpreted cautiously. The sample size ( $n = 5$  per subgroup) limits the extent to which structural tendencies can be generalized. Moreover, coherence levels did not always correspond directly to rhetorical style. As Pena (2021) argues, perceptions of coherence may vary across cultural traditions, suggesting that structural complexity does not automatically equate to higher textual effectiveness in all contexts. Overall, gender-related variation in this dataset appears more subtle than cross-cultural variation. Cultural background corresponded more consistently with differences in argumentative structure, particularly in the inclusion of counterclaims and rebuttals, whereas gender differences were exploratory and context-dependent.

## **Discussion**

The findings reveal nuanced variation across cultural and gender groups in the construction of argumentative writing. While both Indonesian and Japanese learners incorporated fundamental argumentative components, clear structural tendencies emerged across the dataset. A substantial proportion of Indonesian learners' essays consisted primarily of claims supported by data. This indicates that Indonesian writers consistently constructed arguments around the essential TAP components: claim and supporting evidence. In contrast, Japanese learners' essays more frequently included a wider range of Toulmin elements, such as counterclaims, counterclaim data, rebuttals,

and rebuttal data. Importantly, the Indonesian subgroup produced a greater overall quantity of supporting data than the Japanese subgroup. However, Japanese learners demonstrated greater structural diversity in their arguments through the integration of multiple TAP components. According to Toulmin (2003), a claim must be supported by relevant data to qualify as an argument rather than a personal opinion. In this study, a statement was coded as a claim only when it was accompanied by supporting data. From this perspective, Indonesian learners' reliance on claim–data structures reflect adherence to the fundamental requirement of argumentative reasoning. However, the inclusion of counterclaims and rebuttals more frequently observed in Japanese essays indicates a more dialogic engagement with opposing viewpoints. These structural differences may be interpreted through Kaplan's (1966) observation that logic and rhetorical organization are culturally shaped rather than universal. The present findings do not suggest that one structure is superior; rather, they indicate variation in how argumentative coherence is operationalized. Indonesian learners tended to emphasize elaboration of primary claims, whereas Japanese learners more often constructed multi-layered argumentative cycles.

Ferretti et al. (2000) demonstrated that students who receive explicit instruction in incorporating claims, data, counterarguments, and rebuttals tend to produce more structurally complex argumentative texts. Within the present dataset, the relatively lower frequency of counterclaims and rebuttals in Indonesian essays may reflect differences in rhetorical training or educational emphasis rather than limitations in reasoning ability. The integration of multiple TAP components requires learners to anticipate and respond to alternative positions. Such dialogic reasoning is often associated with advanced argumentative structure. However, it is important to recognize that argumentative complexity may be shaped by instructional context, cultural rhetorical norms, and writing conventions. Tsemach and Zohar (2021) argue that reasoning patterns in argumentation are influenced by both cultural and gender-related factors. The current findings support the idea that argumentative structuring is shaped by multiple contextual influences rather than by a single explanatory variable.

Within the Indonesian subgroup, female learners demonstrated slightly higher average coherence levels than male learners. In the Japanese subgroup, male learners showed somewhat higher average levels than female learners. However, these differences were modest and not uniform across all essays. While some qualitative patterns suggest that male participants more frequently incorporated counterclaims and rebuttals reflecting greater structural complexity female participants occasionally relied more on experiential or affective framing in their arguments. These tendencies align with prior findings by Hadiyati et al. (2018), who observed variation in process types across gender, and Nasita et al. (2020), who reported higher emotional expressiveness among female students in personal writing tasks. Nevertheless, the present data do not support categorical conclusions about gendered reasoning styles. Both male and female learners in Indonesia and Japan demonstrated a range of argumentative structures. Gender-related differences were comparatively less pronounced than cross-cultural differences in the inclusion of TAP elements.

Although Japanese learners more frequently achieved higher TAP-based levels due to the presence of counterclaims and rebuttals, higher structural levels do not necessarily guarantee universally perceived coherence. Pena (2021) argues that coherence is conceptualized differently across cultural traditions. In some contexts, coherence may emphasize logical contestation and dialogic structure; in others, it may emphasize unity and elaboration of a central stance. Within this analytical framework, coherence was operationalized through the structural interaction of argumentative components. From that perspective, essays with more integrated TAP elements were categorized at higher levels. However, this evaluation reflects the selected analytical model rather than an absolute hierarchy of rhetorical quality.

## Conclusion

This study examined how cultural background and gender relate to argumentative coherence in Indonesian and Japanese EFL learners' writing at the B1\_2 proficiency level. Using the Toulmin Argument Pattern (TAP) framework, the analysis demonstrated that Indonesian learners predominantly constructed arguments through claim–data sequences, often producing extensive supporting evidence but fewer counterclaims and rebuttals. Japanese learners, by contrast, more frequently incorporated a broader range of TAP elements, resulting in structurally more dialogic argumentative cycles. Gender-based variation was observable but comparatively modest, with cultural background corresponding more consistently to differences in argumentative organization.

These findings reinforce the view that coherence in argumentative writing is not merely a function of surface-level cohesion but of how logical relations among claims, data, and counter-positions are structured. This structural understanding of coherence aligns with systemic functional perspectives that view meaning-making as organized through patterned discourse relations (Sugiarto, Sofwan, & Sutopo, 2015). From this perspective, argumentative coherence emerges through the realization of interpersonal and logical meanings, not simply through the presence of cohesive markers. Furthermore, the study suggests that argumentative organization reflects culturally mediated rhetorical preferences rather than universal logic structures. As demonstrated in multilingual discourse research, textual coherence is shaped by identity positioning, language awareness, and sociocultural negotiation (Sugiarto & Manara, 2025; Sugiarto, 2026). The variation observed between Indonesian and Japanese learners may therefore reflect broader traditions of rhetorical engagement rather than differences in argumentative competence.

The pedagogical implications of these findings are significant. Instruction that explicitly integrates structured argumentation models such as TAP can help learners expand beyond linear claim–data patterns toward more dialogic reasoning. This aligns with prior research emphasizing structured discourse strategies for improving writing quality and meaning-making (Sugiarto, 2024). Additionally, attention to lexical and structural cohesion remains essential, as coherent argumentative development depends on the effective integration of lexical ties and logical progression (Sugiarto & Siregar, 2023). Beyond classroom practice, this study also contributes to a broader

understanding of how multilingual learners negotiate rhetorical expectations across contexts. As multilingual identities increasingly intersect with digital and intercultural discourse environments (Sugiarto & Manara, 2025; Brata et al., 2026), awareness of culturally shaped coherence strategies becomes increasingly relevant. Developing what Sugiarto et al. (2025) describe as language consciousness, an awareness of how textual organization reflects deeper social positioning may enable learners to navigate diverse rhetorical spaces more effectively.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The dataset was limited to 20 essays at a single proficiency level and based on one writing prompt. No inferential statistical testing was conducted, and coherence was operationalized structurally through TAP. Future research should expand the dataset, include multiple prompts, and integrate classroom-based or longitudinal designs to explore how argumentative coherence develops across proficiency levels and instructional contexts. In conclusion, the study highlights that argumentative coherence in EFL writing is structurally realized, culturally mediated, and pedagogically malleable. By combining corpus-based analysis with structured argumentation frameworks, future research can continue to refine our understanding of how learners construct persuasive meaning across languages and cultural contexts.

## References

- Al-Khazraji, A. (2019). Analysis of Discourse Markers in Essays Writing in ESL Classroom. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(2), 559–572. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.12235a>
- Cekiso, M., Tshotsho, B., & Somniso, M. (2016). Exploring First-Year University Students' Challenges with Coherence Writing Strategies in Essay Writing in a South African University. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2016.11890431>
- Chang, W., Liao, C. Y., & Chan, T. W. (2019). Improving children's textual cohesion and writing attitude in a game-based writing environment. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 34(1–2), 133–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1671459>
- Connor, U. (2009). A study of cohesion and coherence in English as a second language students' writing. *Papers in Linguistics*, 17(3), 301–316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08351818409389208>
- Elwood, J. A., & Bode, J. (2014). Student preferences vis-à-vis teacher feedback in university EFL writing classes in Japan. *System*, 42, 333–343. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.12.023>
- Ferretti, R. P., MacArthur, C. A., & Dowdy, N. S. (2000). The effects of an elaborated goal on the persuasive writing of students with learning disabilities and their normally achieving peers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92(4), 694–702. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.92.4.694>

- Hadiyati, N. S., Said, I., & Sugiarto, B.R. (2018). A Transitivity Analysis of Male and Female Students' Final Draft of Critical Responses Paragraph to Literature. *JALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy)*, 2(2), 113. <https://doi.org/10.25157/jall.v2i2.2195>
- Halliday, M., & Hasan, R. (2014). Cohesion in English. *Routledge eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315836010>
- Hart, E. K., & Annear, C. (2020). Research Coherence: A Framework for Successful Student Research. *College Teaching*, 68(3), 112–123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2020.1758022>
- Ishikawa, S. (2013). The ICNALE and sophisticated contrastive interlanguage analysis of Asian learners of English. *Learner corpus studies in Asia and the world*, 1, 91-118. <https://language.sakura.ne.jp/icnale/>
- Lee, J. & Lee, J. (2023) Development of Argumentative Writing Ability in EFL Middle School Students, *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2022.2161438>
- Kaplan, R.B. (1966), Cultural Thought Patterns in Inter-Cultural Education. *Language Learning*, 16: 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1966.tb00804.x>
- Latifi, S., Noroozi, O., Hatami, J., & Biemans, H. J. A. (2021). How does online peer feedback improve argumentative essay writing and learning? *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 58(2), 195–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2019.1687005>
- Nagao, A. (2018). A Genre-Based Approach to Writing Instruction in EFL Classroom Contexts. *English Language Teaching*, 11(5), 130. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n5p130>
- Nasita, D., Sugiarto, B.R., & Thooyibah, L. (2020). The Realization of Interpersonal Meaning on Male and Female Students' Personal Letters. *JALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy)*, 4(1), 57-76. Retrieved from <https://jurnal.unigal.ac.id/jall/article/view/3133>
- Noroozi, O., Banihashem, S. K., Kerman, N. T., Khaneh, M. M. M. C., Babayi, M., Ashrafi, H., & Biemans, H. J. A. (2022). Gender differences in students' argumentative essay writing, peer review performance and uptake in online learning environments. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2022.2034887>
- Osborne, J., Erduran, S., & Simon, S. (2004). Enhancing the quality of argumentation in school science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 41(10), 994–1020. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.20035>

- Pena, J. M. B. (2021). On ancient vs. modern, eastern vs. western, contributions to text coherence theory. *Language & History*, 64(1), 27–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17597536.2021.1888369>
- Qin, J., & Karabacak, E. (2010). The analysis of Toulmin elements in Chinese EFL university argumentative writing. *System*, 38(3), 444–456. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.06.012>
- RahmtAllah, E. a. E. (2020). EFL Students' Coherence Skill in Writing: A Case Study of Third Year Students of Bachelors in English Language. *English Language Teaching*, 13(8), 120. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n8p120>
- Salikin, H. (2019). Factors affecting male and female Indonesian EFL students' writing anxiety. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v9i2.20229>
- Sugiarto, B. R., Sofwan, A., & Sutopo, D. (2015). Mood Realization of the Learning Activities in the Grade VII English Textbook Published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. *English Education Journal*, 5(1). Retrieved from <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/eej/article/view/6844>
- Sugiarto, B. R., & Siregar, B. U. (2023). Lexical Cohesion in English – Indonesia Machine Translation Output: The realization of Manual Post-Editing. *JALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy)*, 7(1), 174. <https://doi.org/10.25157/jall.v7i1.9862>
- Sugiarto, B. R. (2024). Unlocking Multilingual Potential: Systemic Functional Linguistics Strategies for effective descriptive writing instruction. *Sawerigading*, 30(2), 328–336.
- Sugiarto, B. R., & Manara, C. (2025). Digital multilingual identity: insights from Indonesian multilingual EFL students' identity construction on Instagram. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2025.2508867>
- Sugiarto, B.R. (2026). Beyond algorithmic control: decolonizing Sundanese cultural sovereignty on TikTok. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17447143.2025.2610501>
- Brata, Y.R., Sugiarto, B.R., Nurholis, E. Sudarto, S. (2026). Haling ku Aing: A Multimodal Pragmatics Analysis of Sundanese Cultural Values on A Tiktok Video. *Cultura: International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology*, 22(5). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18205713>
- Sugiarto, B.R., et al. (2025). Sadar Bahasa, Sadar Diri: Revolusi Sunyi dalam Konservasi Budaya. *Minhaj Pustaka*. <https://doi.org/10.71457/668959>

- Tsemach, E., & Zohar, A. (2021). The intersection of gender and culture in argumentative writing. *International Journal of Science Education*, 43(6), 969–990. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500693.2021.1894499>
- Tshotsho, B. (2014). Assessing students' academic writing using systemic functional linguistics at a university in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 6(3), 425–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2014.11890154>
- Toulmin, S. (2003). *The Uses of Argument* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511840005>
- Zhang, R., Zou, D., & Cheng, G. (2023). Chatbot-based training on logical fallacy in EFL argumentative writing, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2023.2197417>