Teacher and Guided Multiple Peer Reviewers:

A proposed approach in assisting students' argumentative writing

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Abstract—**Ability to write argumentative text poses several benefits one of which is triggering critical thinking. In its practice, however, students often find it problematic in composing a well-written argumentative text. Based on a preliminary analysis on students' writing samples, three main setbacks were identified. First, some students did not use accurate paragraph format. Second, problems were coming from argumentative text elements like incomplete generic structure and lack of elaboration on argument. Third, problems were derived from systemic functional linguistic (SFL) perspective. These SFL-related setbacks are related to interpersonal metafunction, experiential metafunction, and textual metafunction. To assist students to overcome those problems and enable them to formulate a powerful and accurate argumentative text, an approach called teacher and guided multiple peer reviewers is proposed. This approach is resulted from the combination of teacher and peer feedback. Toulmin's argument pattern is mixed with the approach to guide students to articulate the elaboration of their arguments. Strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat analysis of the approach is included in this research.**

Keywords—approach; argumentative text; systemic functional linguistic; Toulmin argument pattern

I. INTRODUCTION

In several English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts, students are required to have competence on understanding and producing different text genres. This particular study places its focus on argumentative text which, according to the national curriculum, is taught to eleventh graders of senior high school [1]. In learning how to write argumentative text, students learn to formulate arguments justified by relevant proof. Brudvik, Hong, Chee, and Guo argue that argumentation is necessary for triggering students' critical thinking [2]. This idea goes along with the general purpose of Indonesia 2013 curriculum which requires students to be able to construct knowledge by themselves and critical thinking plays an important role here to reach the purpose.

Some problems students find in writing argumentative text are figured out in some research. Paskal, et al. and Nurhikmah, et al. who conducted research on argumentative writing in senior high schools in Indonesia revealed that students still face problems covering linguistic aspects such as vocabulary, and grammatical and mechanic stuff like punctuation, and non-linguistic aspects such as incomplete generic structure, weak arguments, and less elaboration on arguments [3,4]. Grounded on this fact, this study attempts to find out what problems students face while writing argumentative text and offer a solution to overcome those problems.

A. Argumentative Text

Ability to write argumentative text poses several benefits one of which is triggering critical thinking. Another term called exposition text is frequently used to refer to argumentative text. Argumentative text serves a purpose to persuade its readers that something is the case by stating supporting arguments [5,6]. The generic structure of this text consists of three parts called thesis, argument, and conclusion. Conclusion sometimes comes by the term reiteration [5]. Thesis is the part where the writer presents the background of the issue while she also declares her statement toward the issue; the next element, argument, enables the writer to display justification of her position by inserting evidence; and conclusion covers the writer's re-statement of her stance and possibly offers recommendation [7]. In presenting evidence to support the writer's position, a wide range of sources can be used like facts, examples, quotes, statistics, news, and research reports.

Addressing the linguistic features of an argumentative text, it includes numerous relevant elements. Knapp and Watkins mention mental verbs, connectives, impersonal voice, modality, and nominalization as commonly used grammatical components [8]. Mental verbs refer to those verbs showing the writer's psychological process like 'believe', 'think', 'like', etc. Regarding connectives, an argumentative text writer often applies temporal, causal, and comparative connectives. As for impersonal voice, it refers to the writer's attempt to make her arguments to be more objective. Two ways can be done to manifest impersonal voice; by using the pronoun 'we' instead of 'I' and creating absolute statements. The last two elements are modality and nominalization. Modality is used to indicate the writer's stance whereas nominalization functions to compose condense information, describes abstract issues, and remove agency.

To be able to craft a good argumentative text, a writer needs to consider the above-mentioned characteristics. The linguistic features or grammatical structures might be optional,

but the purpose of the text and the generic structure must be well-demonstrated to successfully deliver its message.

B. Argumentative Text in SFL Perspective

In teaching English, teachers might have their own focuses. While for those who emphasize on grammar achievement might miss to teach variants of English and neglect the effective use of the language, for those who pay attention only in communication and avoid teaching grammar can leave their learners trapped in an incomprehensible language production in certain situations [9]. The systemic functional linguistic attempts to put everything in balance. It not only cares about how words are put into sentences or sentences into paragraph but also it pays attention on how meaning is constructed by considering the surrounding factors and context. Eggins states four main points systemic functional linguists label to a language [10]. Those four claims are that language is useful and practical, language serves to make meaning, meanings are socially and culturally contextual, and language use is a semiotic process in which meaning is constructed based on our selection of language.

As this analysis is based on SFL framework, the elaboration will cover three big metafunctions of language; interpersonal, experiential, and textual. Interpersonal metafunction exemplifies how a writer interacts with the language she selects. It underlies mainly two functional elements of language use called interaction which maintain interpersonal facet and content which refers to the actual intention of the interaction [11]. Interpersonal metafunction is represented in Mood which deals with the arrangement of Subject and Finite and Modality which is used to express certainty, probability, obligation, inclination, usuality, or typicality [9,11]. Mood will define whether the sentence is giving information in positive or negative sentences, or demanding information or interrogative sentences whereas Modality will show the writer's attitude or position in the writing.

Experiential metafunction concentrates on the message that a sentence tries to deliver. Thus, it gives specific devotion to Participant (who, what), Process (verb), and Circumstance (where, when, why, how). Every sentence a writer writes resembles how she constructs the content through linguistic elements she chooses. Different choices of words might represent distinctive content the readers will perceive. There are several types of Process namely material, verbal, relational, mental, and existential.

Textual metafunction is concerned with the arrangement of constituent in a sentence to maintain text coherence. Textual metafunction places attention on the Theme or the whole first constituent of a sentence. Theme actually functions as a starting point where it will also lead to the rest of the sentence called Rheme. Thompson suggests four main functions of Theme namely giving a clue of what is the text about, determining the outline for interpreting the clause, creating text limitation, and indicating the most vital part in speaker's or writer's view [11].

Based on the above research by Paskal et al. and Nurhikmah, et al., Indonesian senior high school students seem to still have problematic issues with argumentative text writing

in SFL perspective, especially related to grammar and text coherence [3,4]. Therefore, this study attempts to offer an approach to minimize students' problems to happen in writing argumentative text.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study attempts to reveal the answers of these questions.

- What problems do students encounter in writing argumentative text?

- What solution can be proposed to overcome those problematic aspects?

Case study is chosen to be the design of this research. This design enables the researcher to inspect a specific case in its real context with no intervention [12-14]. Data were gained through document analysis of fifteen students' argumentative writing samples from a private senior high school in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. Those samples were analyzed in terms of its linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. An interview was conducted to the teacher to collect more information related to teaching learning process, students' competence, and challenges she faced while teaching argumentative text writing. The proposed solution in this research might become one of references the teacher can turn to if she comes across similar situation.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. What Does the Teacher Say?

Overall, fifteen writing samples were collected from tenth grader students. The school where the data were gathered is a private senior high school in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. It implements the national curriculum with some modifications to fit the school's goals. In learning English, students use a book entitled "Think" published by Cambridge University Press in 2016.

Prior to writing this paper, an interview was conducted to the class teacher. Looking at students' writing only does not give the big picture of what they are going through while writing argumentative text. Therefore, deeper information is expected to come out from the interview. The following is the summary of the interview.

According to the class teacher, the strength of her students lies on the way they articulate their writing once they have found ideas to write. Language does not seem to be a big barrier to them. Ideas are conveyed smoothly through sentences. However, this can only happen when students already know what to write. Thus, this fact leads to the most common problem the students face namely generating ideas. Writing requires the author to have arguments, opinions, facts, news, and other ideas to be conveyed. The second problem is related to students' vocabulary level. It takes time for them to find the right words for what they want to express. Another problem is specifically related to writing an argumentative text. As students are required to provide arguments to support their position, they find it hard to find supporting details to write on

the paragraph. What happens mostly is students state each of their arguments in one sentence with no elaboration.

Those are the problems that the students face and challenges that the teacher encounters in writing session. The following part posts an analysis on students' argumentative writing.

B. Analysis on Students' Writing Samples

1)Text purpose and features: Each student wrote an argumentative text and the topic was social media. Students' writing texts later came in two narrower issues; social media bring people together and raising charity using social media. Most of students chose the former issue in their writing.

The result of the analysis proves that students had good general understanding on argumentative genre. All students met the purpose of an argumentative text in their writing. They had made their effort to persuade and provide readers with arguments to raise a case.

The analysis of students' sample texts will be divided into several parts. First, it is dealing with the format of the writing, specifically the paragraph. Out of fifteen works, nine of them had only one or two paragraphs. When a genre text consists of one paragraph only, it is not clear enough what the main idea of the paragraph is since the three generic structures seem to be placed densely in one place. Thus, it does not match the requirement of a paragraph stating that one paragraph should only have one main idea.

Second, some students did not include complete generic structure of an argumentative text. Some did not have thesis, some did not write supporting details, while others did not confirm their position in conclusion or re-iteration. When one of those is missing, the arguments are becoming to a certain degree less powerful. What most students missed was the elaboration of their arguments. Those students were supposed to write arguments to display the case, but it was, in practice, just kind of a list. No supporting evidence is stated.

Third, students seemed to have problems related to grammatical stuff. The most common mistakes were addressing subject-verb agreement, plurality, preposition use, conjunction, tenses, and comparative degree expression.

Fourth, it dealt with mechanic things like punctuation, spelling, and capital letter. It happens a lot when students write manually since it will not be automatically corrected as if they use a computer.

Despite the above weaknesses, two obviously positive things can be seen from students' writing. The first one is that they have good understanding on what function an argumentative text serves. This is the very first point which matters in this case. The second one is that students have a generally excellent ability in writing. The analysis above has been arranged according to its frequent occurrences. If there are grammatical mistakes, it happens to only minority. Most students even manifest a good writing style and ability.

2)Metafunction analysis: Regarding interpersonal metafunction, the most repeated error was inaccurate Finite. This incorrect Finite come in the form of disagreement between Subject and Finite and double Finite use in one clause. Another problem happens when the student would like to convey the message in a sentence, but she missed the Subject and Finite. Instead of formulating a sentence, what this student wrote is a phrase.

In terms of experiential metafunction, students displayed some types of Process including Relational, Causative, Mental, and Material. Several clauses appeared to consist of same constituents. All of those clauses were in active sentences so that there was not quite a variety. Students often used the verb 'has' which sometimes was not accurate since it did not correspond to the Subject or meaning this student wanted to convey. The use of this verb represents Relational Process, specifically possession [10]. To convey messages through correct and appropriate structures, students can actually use other types of Process. Some messages written by students are not really clear as the Process utilized by the student is not the most representative one. Thus, students need to be introduced to various Process that they can use in writing an argumentative text.

Textual metafunction puts its emphasis on what constituent comes first; which more often than not symbolizes the most important part of the sentence. In the students' sample texts, three distinctive types of Theme called interpersonal, topical, and textual were utilized. In using textual Theme, conjunction was often used to begin sentences. This was done as an effort to maintain the cohesion among sentences. However, the choice of conjunction was often not accurate. Students also repeated the same words or terms several times to maintain the cohesion and coherence, yet what happened was replicating the same ideas instead of giving more elaboration. In this case, students need to be acknowledged that maintaining unified whole of a text does not only come in one way by reciting the same Subject. Instead, it can be done by utilizing other Theme types; whether interpersonal, topical, or textual; or whether marked or unmarked.

C. Teacher and Guided Multiple Peer Reviewers: A Proposed Solution

Teacher and guided multiple peer reviewers is the approach offered to deal with students' problems in writing argumentative text. This is actually an approach proposed by Donasari [15]. She attempts to combine the strength of teacher feedback and peer feedback. Feedback coming from the teacher is usually perceived to be accurate and effective by students [15]. Peer feedback, on the other hand, is quite problematic as students might feel uneasy of correcting their peer's work, and feel incompetent and not objective of doing correction [15]. Despite those challenging circumstances of peer feedback, it is in fact really advantageous for students to promote their critical thinking as they are demanded to do evaluation, encourage them to be creative as they attempt to search for solution for the incorrect parts, and maintain social interaction as they communicate with their peers [15,16].

The writer here would like to highlight the word "multiple" in the proposed approach. It refers to not only multiple peer reviewers but also multiple aspects being reviewed. Donasari

suggests three peer reviewers who will focus on coherent paragraph, sentences problems, and pattern of paragraph accordingly [15]. The writer here makes a modification on the reviewed aspects. Specific aspect addressing argumentative text is included. The flowing of this approach is described in the following diagram.

Fig. 1. Cycle in teacher and guided multiple peer reviewers.

The detailed description on the procedure of this approach is explained below.

1)Coaching: In this very first phase, the teacher coaches students on how to write, specifically to write argumentative text. The how-to-write materials cover how to write grammatically accurate sentences, the mechanics of writing, and mainly on how to make a proper paragraph. The latter should be addressed carefully as students' writing samples show that several of them only consist of one or two paragraph. One paragraph is meant to have one main idea. How-to-write argumentative writing includes the elaboration on the purpose, generic structure, and some linguistic features commonly used in argumentative text.

This coaching session also considers the main problem found in students' writing samples. That is lack of elaboration on students' arguments. Therefore, the teacher introduces Toulmin's argument pattern here [17,18].

TABLE I. TOULMIN'S ARGUMENT PATTERN

Argument 1 (for or against the issue)	• Statement or claim • Warrant: data, statistics, experience
Argument 2 (for or against the issue)	• Statement or claim • Warrant: data, statistics, experience, etc

In stating their position toward a case, students are required to present some reasons or arguments to support their position. Statement or claim refers to the author's reason that will maintain her position or stance towards the case. Each statement should be justified by warrant. Warrant can be retained from facts, data, statistics, experience, and other relevant proof. Teacher needs to make sure that students understand this idea so that they know how to insert elaboration on each of their argument.

After the coaching is accomplished, students write an argumentative text. Prior to the writing, they have searched for supporting evidence for their arguments.

2)Peer review 1: The first peer reviewer focuses on pattern of paragraph and generic structure of an argumentative text. As the name of this approach suggests, students are given a checklist to guide them in checking their peer's work. For the first reviewer, here is the checklist. Some criteria are taken from Kirszner and Mandell [19].

TABLE II. CHECKLIST ON GENERIC STRUCTURE AND PARAGRAPH PATTERN

Peer Reviewer 1: Review on paragraph			
No	Description	Yes/No	Explanation or suggestion
1.	Does the text have thesis statement?		
2.	Does the text have arguments?		
3.	Does the text have conclusion?		
4.	Does each paragraph have one main idea?		
5.	Is the topic sentence of each paragraph clear?		
6.	Does each paragraph include enough supporting details?		
7.	Are there any irrelevant sentences and need to be cut off?		
8.	Are all the words necessary or should some of them be omitted?		
9.	Is each paragraph clearly formatted using tab or space?		

After the reviewer has accomplished checking, the work is handed back to the author of the text. The respective writer will have revision on her writing. When the writer has completed the first revision, the work is going to be checked by the second peer reviewer.

3)Peer review 2: The second peer reviewer highlights the elaboration of the arguments. She checks whether or not her peers include supporting details for their arguments.

TABLE III. CHECKLIST ON ELABORATION OF ARGUMENTS

Peer Reviewer 2: Review on elaboration of arguments			
No	Description	Yes/No	Explanation or suggestion
1.	Does each argument have statement or claim?		
2.	Is each statement justified by warrant?		
3.	Are there any irrelevant claims or warrants?		
4.	Are the warrants strong enough?		
5.	Is there any additional relevant evidence to your knowledge that can be used to support the arguments?		

Similar to the previous procedure, the respective writer turns in her work to the third peer reviewer after she accomplishes the revision of this session.

4)Peer review 3: The last peer reviewer takes care of grammatical and mechanic stuff. This checklist is slightly adapted from Kirszner and Mandell [19].

TABLE IV.   CHECKLIST ON GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS

No	Description	Yes/ No	Explanation or suggestion
	Peer Reviewer 3: Review on grammar and mechanics		
1.	Are all the sentences complete and grammatically correct?		
2.	Do all the subjects and verbs agree?		
3.	Have the correct verb tense been used?		
4.	Are commas used where they are required?		
5.	Have other punctuation marks been used correctly?		
6.	Are capital letter used where they are required?		
7.	Are all words spelled correctly?		

This is the last peer review session. After completed the revision, students submit their writing to the teacher to have final check.

5)Teacher review: As most, if not all, aspects of writing have been reviewed by students, teacher might only need to recheck all the parts. Peer review not only creates opportunity for students to learn but also helps the teacher in correcting students' work. Fatal mistakes should be re-revised by students. The last revision is done based on the result of teacher's review in this session.

The above description is the detailed procedure on how to administer teacher and guided multiple peer reviewers. It might take some time, but referring to the syllabus, it still fits the time allocated for learning one particular topic. As this approach involves a lot of portion of students' participation, it provides wider opportunity for them to learn more and independently while at the same time constructing their own knowledge on the related topic.

D. SWOT Analysis of the Approach

The researcher has conducted a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat (SWOT) analysis towards the proposed approach. This analysis was accomplished through an interview in which the researcher explained first the detail of the proposed approach and then the respondents identified each aspect of SWOT. Respondents were carefully chosen by considering their experience in teaching argumentative text. The analysis involved five respondents four of which are master students of English education and have ever taught argumentative text writing.

The identified strength of the approach are described as follows.

- Promoting autonomous learning.

- Fostering learning cooperation.

- Supporting the implementation of K-13 I Indonesia where teachers function only as facilitator.

- Contributing to students' knowledge of specific topics from friends' arguments.

- Training students to be tolerant to others' opinion.

- Lowering students' learning anxiety.

- Providing space for learning engagement as students are given important roles.

The weaknesses that might appear from the approach are listed on the following.

- Dependency on higher achieving students as the lower ones feel unconfident about their knowledge.

- Requiring longer time as the learning procedure demands a number of activities.

- Possibility of inaccurate review as some students could have misconception of relevant concepts.

- Possibility of unequal judgement on evaluating peer's work.

Some possible opportunities that the approach might pose are described in the following list.

- If it can be applied optimally, teachers will be really supported and assisted in terms of evaluating students' work.

- Collaborative work can be frequently applied in the coaching phase before they write.

- In long run, there is a space to enrich students' linguistic competence and writing ability.

- Scaffolding is highly facilitated.

- The approach also might pose several threats.

- On a low supervision, only high achieving students will gain many benefits.

- Students output is minimum; might only one writing product in one topic as the approach demands a number of activities.

IV.   CONCLUSION

Learning how to write argumentative text is enormously positive for students' critical thinking. Students are required to state their own stance toward a case by stating their arguments or reasons supporting their position while at the same time presenting proof or evidence to justify their arguments. This kind of exercise leads students' to be able to construct their own knowledge in which constructing knowledge independently becomes the ultimate goal of the present curriculum namely curriculum 2013 [1].

Despite the great effort of directing students to be critical, some problematic issues are still faced by both the teacher and students while dealing with argumentative text writing. Those problems are recognized to be in terms of linguistic and non-linguistic aspect. The genre-based approach stated in the curriculum sometimes does not really work very well. Thus, the writer offers a quite innovative solution adapted from Donasari namely teacher and guided multiple peer reviewers mixed with Toulmin's argument pattern at a particular point in the procedure [15]. This approach demands students' active participation without putting aside the teacher's role. Before implementing this newly proposed approach, teachers need to

be aware of the strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat it might pose. Teachers might need to carefully consider students' present proficiency and time allotment. If teachers wish to apply this approach while integrating it with technology, it will be highly appreciated if the technology can make the process more effective and efficient. Eventually, it is expected that this approach works well for students and the teacher to cope with related problematic issues in learning to write argumentative text.

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