

# Untangling Students' Problems in Writing Argumentative:

## SFL perspective and fishbone strategy

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**Abstract**—This paper proposed an alternative way to teach argumentative text based on systemic functional linguistics. The design employed is case study which allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. In this case, it is conducted to untangle students' problem in writing argumentative text. Based on the previously conducted analysis, it was discovered that grade X Senior high school in Bandung encounter some problems in writing argumentative text such as tense formation, the improper use of process and finites, the absence of subject, and inappropriate thematic progression. Based on these analyzed problems, a solution called Fishbone strategy is proposed. Belonging to diagram-based approach, this strategy allows students to construct and deconstruct the text in order to comprehend both the general and detailed information of the text. Moreover, it allows a thoughtful analysis, easy to implement by means of visual representation and even after the need has been addressed, the fishbone diagram shows many areas of weaknesses that can be revised.

**Keywords**—argumentative text; systemic functional linguistic; genre-based approach; fishbone strategy

### I. INTRODUCTION

Despite its popularity among domestic scholars, Functional grammar seems to be relatively new to most EFL teachers. Being more accustomed in teaching grammar the traditional way, it is not surprising to witness teachers' unfamiliarity with Functional grammar. Functional grammar can be used to analyze students' problems in English skills, specifically writing. Moreover, students' writing seems to be one of the biggest concerns of English teachers. Because being able to write academically is a very essential skill for students. However, unless teachers expand their horizon into new approaches, alternative ways to overcome students' writing difficulties will remain unfold. Scholars argued that teachers are required to choose approaches which can accommodate time, students' needs, and the practice [1] as well as the learning objective [2]. Thus, as functional grammar gained more recognition for its success as a powerful tool in helping students' writing, it was then adapted in the curriculum by Indonesian government.

In early 2000s, two curricula were introduced and implemented by the government to address the needs of

improving students' communicative competence. One of which is curriculum 2006 or KTSP (school-based curriculum). The standard competence of education formulates by the 2006 English curriculum of PP No 19, 2006 is regarding the development in oral and written communication to get informational letter [3]. The emergence of this curriculum, therefore, recommends the application of Genre-based Approach as the new approach in the teaching of English.

Initially, Genre-based approach (GBA) was adopted and practiced in Australia to address the problems with students' literacy issues. This approach was labelled as successful because both teachers' and students' willingness to write increased. It is believed that teaching through genre might assist the students in writing since they have specific topic to write, story and factual genre included. Since then, more and more countries adhere to the implementation of GBA in language teaching, such as China and Korea [4]. However, it should be noted that in Australia, English is the first language. Meanwhile, in Indonesian context, the status of English is as a foreign language. Therefore, in regards to the implementation of GBA in Indonesia, technical as well as practical challenges were encountered.

The gap of the proper way of teaching by Genre-based approach can easily be seen from the teaching of grammar. Genre-based approach proposes implicit way of teaching grammar. However, up until recently, teachers still separate the learning of grammar from the learning of text. Based on some evidence suggested, most teaching of English remains focused on traditional grammar teaching despite attempts at reform [5]. It means that the teachers do not really feel the significance of changing their way of teaching despite the reformation of approaches in teaching English. In line with this, it is significant for the teacher and the students to have basic understanding of how English operates and functions as writing [6].

Therefore, to attain success of Genre-based approach in Indonesian context, its application should be gradually approached by strengthening teachers'—and later the students'—understanding on the basic concept of GBA itself. This, hopefully, can be achieved by learning systemic functional grammar attentively. According to Derewianka, learning through functional approach has several advantages

[7]. The advantages are the use of holistic approaches that complement modern classroom practice, description of how language operates at text level, and helping in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses which enable the teachers provide clear and positive suggestion on how to create more effective texts. Therefore, understanding how functional approach works is necessary for teachers in order to be able to improve students' argumentative writing.

#### A. Argumentative Text

One of the main functions of writing is to express the writer's attitude and opinion toward people, things, or events. The attitude or opinion can lean toward positive or negative in ways that are more authoritative and enable a more reasonable style of argument [8]. Argumentative is one of the type of texts for solely that purpose. Thus, it is included as the topic frequently taught at second grade of senior high school. Argumentative text belongs to a genre group called "Exposition" which deals with the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the world around us [7]. Students are expected to be able to write and activate higher order thinking skills by generating their opinion in argumentative manner. In line with this, Knapp and Watkins argue that learning a genre should begin with exposition to help the students make clear focus by putting forward viewpoint and supporting evidence for the arguments [6]. In other words, the purpose of argumentative text is arguing to justify actions or opinion and convince people by adding evidence to support it.

Based on Knapp's genre model, essays, expositions, discussion, debates, interpretations and evaluations are included in the social process of genre of arguing [6]. As stated earlier, argumentative is included in the genre group of named "Exposition". Moreover, exposition is included in the factual genre along with Explanation, Procedure, and Discussion. Factual genres allow writer to take part in social life and it plays significant role in formal education because it reveal the way and the reason for things to happen. The text organization of argumentative is generally sequenced in thesis-argument and conclusion order.

An argumentative text usually starts with thesis or thesis statement. Thesis commonly consists of these stage moves; controversial statement, information, evaluation, and marker [9]. Only one of which is obligatory in a thesis. Most importantly, the presence of issue is often elaborated by background of information. It is about the introduction of the background which is related to the issue, not the opinions of the writer [4]. In some case, however, thesis actually provides opinion of the writer which is a preposition or preview taken by the writer before proceeding to the argument.

The next stage is argument. It is in this stage does the writer need to justify the position taken. There can be one or more points in the argument and it is necessary to always include evidence to support the argument itself [7]. The features of language the argument stage are generalized participants (sometimes human but often abstract), listing signals (firstly, secondly, etc.) and transition signals such as marking addition, condition, contrast, etc. to indicate change in the discussion. Moreover, when presenting position and points in the

argument, mainly timeless present tense and emotive words are employed, such as *may* and *should* to convince the reader.

The last stage is the conclusion. In this stage, the writer will attempt to sum up the position by reaffirming the general resolution of the issue. It included a marker from a restricted class, such as to sum up, therefore, to conclude, that's why, and so on. In regards to the language features, argumentative text consists the elements below [7]:

- Use of connectives (so, because of, first, second, etc.)
- Use of technical terms relating to the issue
- Use of timeless present tense
- Use of variety of verb (process) ; material, mental, and relational
- Use of emotive words (modals such as may, can, should, etc.)

#### B. Argumentative Text in SFL perspective

Genre can be found in various disciplines, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) included. In writing, one has to know the importance of using the correct genre in order to avoid sending wrong signal to the reader. Genre is classified into two; story and factual. The overall purpose of story genre is to entertaining the reader by evaluating the significance of events or people. Narrative, Recount, and News story are included in the story genre. The texts included in factual genres are Procedure, Protocol, Information report, Explanation, Exposition, and Discussion. Thus, argumentative is one of the genres included in the factual genre.

In analyzing argumentative text, three form of metafunctions are used in SFL; interpersonal, experiential, and textual. When texts share the same context of situation to a greater or lesser extent, they will share the same experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings and so they belong to the same register [10]. Register is commonly defined as the way meanings vary consistently with the context of situation. The common features are in terms of field, tenor, and mode of discourse. The field can be investigated by questioning its experiential meaning in terms of participants, processes, and circumstances. The participants are the actor or the goal in a clause, the processes are the doer of the clause, and the circumstance is the time, manner or place adjunct in the clause. On the other hand, tenor investigation is in the domain of interpersonal meaning.

In line with the statement above, Jenkins and Pico state that the analysis of argumentative text through register might assist us in revealing explicit connections between sentences, knowing how to establish tenor (which leads to interpersonal metafunction), choosing appropriate processes and participants for the field, identifying appropriate indications of time and reality/possibility such as tenses and modality [11]. Therefore, a Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) should be employed to ensure whether or not the text has met the proper criteria of argumentative text in terms of textual and grammatical features through the analysis of Interpersonal metafunction, experiential metafunction and Textual metafunction.

### C. Interpersonal Metafunction

The interpersonal metafunction uses language to encode interaction, to show how defensible we find our propositions, to encode ideas about obligation and inclination and to express our attitudes [10]. In communication, language functions as a mean to express one's point of view, to establish and maintain relationship and so forth. Therefore, in analyzing the interpersonal metafunction of argumentative text, mood selection, type of Mood and Appraisal will be employed.

1) *Mood choice*: Mood choice refers to the type of clause [10]. Halliday and Matthiessen suggests four basic speech roles: giving information (statement), demanding information (question), giving goods and services (offer), and demanding goods and services (command) [12]. In argumentative text, particularly the thesis is mostly constructed using statement or declarative clause.

2) *Type of mood*: Mood is one of the specific element of clause. It is the core element of exchange in a clause because it usually involves Subject and Finite. When Subject and Finite form a component of the clause, it is called Mood. The Subject can be in the form of Nominal group, Pronoun, and there (a pseudo-subject). Whereas the Finite is the first functional element of the verbal group that can be easily identified in yes/no questions. As long as the finite appears, whether explicitly or implicitly in a clause, after preceding or following Subject, then the Mood exists. Mood, therefore, can be found in interrogative clauses including WH questions, declarative clauses, imperative. Residue, on the other hand, is the rest of the clause that is not considered as the Mood. All of the other details that merely fills in a clause refers to the Residue. Residue is divided into three; predicator, complement, and adjunct. The Mood of Argumentative text is mostly in the found of declarative clause. Thus, the sequence is:

It	is	a place	where they can learn
Subject	Finite	Complement	Adjunct
Mood		Residue	

### D. Appraisal

Appraisal, on the other hand, is expressed by lexical choices. It deals with speaker's and writer's selection of linguistic varieties such as meaning and value scales used to negotiate evaluation which focuses on three main region; engagement, graduation, and attitude. Moreover, it is essential to note that appraisal is a central part of the meaning of any text and that any analysis of the interpersonal meanings of a text must consider [12]. Attitude is the center of discussion in appraisal that is clearly related to modality in which greater or lesser extent of appraisal may be disguised.

*That's why children should go to school.*

Here, the writer is attempting to restate his/her position by using 'should' in the conclusion of the argumentative text to convince the reader of his/her stance. It clearly shows the attitude the writer wants to put forward regarding the issue.

### E. Experiential Metafunction

If interpersonal concerns with the purpose and function of spoken or written utterances, experiential metafunction focus more on the meaning of content. Experiential meanings are manipulated using language by the speaker or writer in order to encode experiences of the world. Language, according to experiential metafunction, reflects our impression of the world in terms of three generalization; things, events, and circumstances. Thus, experiential function of language has broken down a clause into three functional constituents. They are participant, process, and circumstances. These models of experience are ordered in such a way in order to answer who is doing what to whom under what circumstance. In analyzing Argumentative text, the main focus solely on the processes.

1) *Process*: The process is seen as the center of a clause that is realized by verbal group in experiential perspective because it mainly is about the action done by the participant. The process model uses verbal English to indicate whatever is happening, acting, doing, sensing, saying, or simply being. Furthermore, processes are divided into; material processes, mental processes, verbal processes, experiential processes, behavioral processes, and relational processes. These processes differ in terms of their domain, restriction, and role of participant. Here are the list of processes elaborated by Butt et al.

- Material process

It functions to construe the material world of doing, it is also called action verbs in the traditional grammar.

If	They	don't go	to school
Conjunction	Actor	Material process	Goal

- Mental process

It functions to construe and may project the inner world of consciousness, it is also called stative verbs in traditional grammar.

I	Think	Children	should go	to school
Actor	Mental process	Goal	Modality	circumstance

- Relational process

Relational process is divided into two; relational attributive and relational identifying. The former functions to construe relationship of description, and the latter functions to construe relationship or identification and equation.

It	Is	A place where they can learn, make friends and have fun.
identified	Relational process	Identifier

### F. Textual Metafunction

Textual metafunction deals with how speakers try to convey their messages in a way that all the preceding and following information in the clause are connected smoothly

while interacting with the listeners. In other words, it shows that there is continuation and relationship between clauses. To signal textual metafunction, repetition, conjunction, and theme are used. Is seen as the starting point of the clause. Different starting point might lead to different meaning depending on which event the speakers want to emphasize. Often theme is conflated with Subject because of its placement. However, adjunct and complement can also be chosen as theme when speakers wish to establish and signal different starting point in their discourse. The rest of the clause which is not theme is called rheme which provide the content the main information that the writer or speaker wants the addressee to know. Theme and Rheme will be the focus of analysis in Argumentative text.

#### 1) Types of themes

a) *Topical themes*: Topical themes is a theme or starting point which commonly filled with nominal group or Subject. The subject is the theme, and the rest is the rheme. Thus, it is called a topical theme.

b) *Textual themes*: In contrast with topical themes, textual themes are usually filled with a group of phrase. Conjunctions frequently to occur in textual themes.

2) *Thematic progression*: The thematic progression is divided into three types; thematic drift, constant theme pattern, and zig-zag theme. Based on the research done by Jenkins and Pico [9], the widely used theme is the zig-zag pattern. Moreover, Daneš points out that the Thematic Progression of text is, "closely connected with the investigation of the so-called "text coherence" or "text connexity" [13]. There are three main types of thematic progression [13].

### II. METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative design in the form of case study. In this case, the event is indicated in the classroom context which aims to reveal the problems students of grade X of Senior High School in Bandung while writing argumentative text. The problems are seen from the SFL perspective in order to analyze the text as a whole without neglecting the context and the language use. As a theoretical basis, literature review is presented as to analyze the problems encountered.

For the purpose of the analysis, one writing product of the student was selected. The selection criteria were based on one writing that can represent the variety of problems faced by most students in writing argumentative text. Furthermore, the framework employed is established from the guideline of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) which is consistently advocated by scores of scholars such as [6,7,10]. Alternative solution was proposed by mostly contemplating on the problems found in the student's argumentative writing. Moreover, to ensure the feasibility of the solution offered, the present study should refer to the syllabus, the time allocation, the book, and also the context in which it will be applied.

### III. FINDINGS

A Student's writing Analysis Based on Mechanics of Writing Text and Grammatical Errors.

#### A. Mechanics of Writing

According to the guideline of writing assessment from Heaton [14], Mechanics in writing is one of the element to take into consideration. Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are included in the mechanics of writing. Fortunately, the student did not have any difficulty in the spelling and capitalization. However, some errors are found in the punctuation particularly in the use of comma to separate the adjunct with the subject in the beginning of the sentence. The problem can be found in clause (6) and (7).

(6) *In addition to that social media can also raise money for charity.*

(7) *In my opinion social media and the internet is one of the best way to raise money for charity.*

From the clauses above, it can be concluded that the student is still confuse about the punctuation, particularly in the beginning of the sentence.

#### B. Grammatical Errors

Grammatically correct writing is easier for the reader to comprehend. Therefore, it is important to produce well-written product. However, since English is the second or foreign language of the student, it is possible that the grammatical features of the first language influence the second language which cause errors. The common error found is in the student's attempt to create complex and compound sentence. Problems occur when there is disagreement between Subject and Verb, and the unparalleled phrases within the clause.

(2) *With social media and internet made everything easier*

(3) *You can shop online*

(4) *Order food online*

(5) *and find how to do things in internet*

(11) *So my conclusion is social media and the internet is a really good medium for bringing people together for a better cause or just simply communicating between friends.*

From the clauses above, it can be seen that the student is still confuse about constructing complex and compound sentence. The Subject is plural but the verb is singular. Moreover, the students found it difficult to make the phrases within the clause become parallel. The sentences below are the examples of disagreement between Subject and Verb.

(1) *In the 21th century, social media and the internet play a big part in everyone's daily life*

(8) *with a touch of a finger you can contribute in helping those who is in need of money, food, education, and other things.*

#### C. Systemic Functional Linguistics

In analyzing argumentative text, three form of metafunctions are used in SFL; interpersonal, experiential, and textual.

1) *Interpersonal metafunction*: Halliday and Matthiessen suggests four basic speech roles: giving information (statement), demanding information (question), giving goods and services (offer), and demanding goods and services (command) [10]. The statements are commonly expressed by declarative clauses, questions by interrogative clauses, and commands by imperative clauses. The writing of the students is dominated with declarative clause since argumentative text is commonly written in statements.

Moreover, the student's composition of clauses is incorrect which in turn will affect the Mood as well. Mood is one of the specific elements of a clause. It is the core element of exchange in a clause because it usually involves Subject and Finite. When Subject and Finite form a component of the clause, it is called Mood. Based on the 12 clauses that the student wrote, most of the Subjects are nominal group and pronoun. 'Social media', 'website', 'You' and 'I' are used as the Subject. However, there are two clauses (clause 2 and 8) that have problems with Subject. One did not possess any Subject and the other seemed to have two Subjects.

(2) *With social media and internet made everything easier*

(8) *Website like care.org you can easily donate your money*

Another constituent in Mood analysis is the Finite. In writing argumentative text, present tense is commonly used. Therefore, Finite in the form of present dominates. However, the student used past tense to state a fact in clause (2) which is ungrammatical.

(2) *With social media and internet made everything easier*

The clause above indicates the students' confusion in choosing the correct tenses in writing. Moreover, as stated earlier, there is no subject in the clause. Therefore, it is difficult to comprehend the meaning the student wanted to convey. One possible explanation is because the sentence was influenced by the student's first language structure.

One last element to analyze in the interpersonal metafunction is modality. Since argumentative text is aimed to persuade the reader to see from the writer's point of view, modality or emotive words is used. In the student's writing, the word 'can' is used more than once. In fact, five out of the eleven clauses consist of the word 'can'. They are clause (3), (6), (8), (9), and (10).

(3) *you can shop online*

(6) *In addition to that social media can also raise money for charity.*

(8) *Website like care.org you can easily donate your money to the people in need of money using Paypal and other methods.*

(9) *With a touch of a finger you can contribute in helping those who is in need of money, food, education, and other things.*

(10) *The internet can also help you to communicate with family or friends abroad with ease.*

From the clauses above. It is obvious that the student believes that social media and the internet have many advantages. Hence, the student attempted to convince the reader of his or her stance. However, there is a tendency of the student to repeat the same modal in many of the clause making the ideas in the argument seem repetitive.

2) *Experiential metafunction*: Language, according to experiential metafunction, reflects our impression of the world in terms of three generalization; things, events, and circumstances. Thus, experiential function of language has broken down a clause into three functional constituents. They are participant, process, and circumstances. These models of experience are ordered in such a way in order to answer who is doing what to whom under what circumstance. The process model uses verbal English to indicate whatever is happening, acting, doing, sensing, saying, or simply being. Furthermore, processes are divided into; material processes, mental processes, verbal processes, experiential processes, behaviorial processes, and relational processes. These processes differ in terms of their domain, restriction, and role of participant.

In the student's writing, the majority of processes are material process. In fact, 10 out of 12 clauses contain Material processes. Butt et al. states that Material processes has something to do with doing and happening which encodes experiences in the external, material world [10]. In line with this, Thompson argued that it is the most salient types of process, as in the extract above, are those involving physical actions [12]. Below are the clauses containing Material processes.

(1) *In the 21th century, social media and the internet play a big part in everyone's daily life.*

(2) *With social media and internet made everything easier,*

(3) *you can shop online,*

(4) *order food online,*

(5) *and find how to do things in internet.*

(6) *In addition to that social media can also raise money for charity.*

(8) *Website like care.org you can easily donate your money to the people in need of money using Paypal and other methods.*

(9) *with a touch of a finger you can contribute in helping those who is in need of money, food, education, and other things.*

(10) *the internet can also help you to communicate with family or friends abroad with ease.*

(11) *You can chat, video call, and communicate with family or friends abroad with ease*

Moreover, another process that was used is Relational process in the form of identifying. This group, known as relational processes, has to do with the attributes of class membership or with specific identity [11]. Moreover, relational identifying processes are those whose function is to identify. The clauses are clause (7) and (12).

(1) In my opinion social media and the internet is one of the best way to raise money for charity.

(12) So my conclusion is social media and the internet is a really good medium for bringing people together for a better cause

	In the 21th century	social media and the internet	play	a big part	in everyone's daily life.
Textual	Theme (Marked Topical)	Rheme			

Here a relationship is set up between two concepts and the function of the process is simply to signal the existence of the relationship [12].

Other constituent to analyze is the Participant in the clause. Different processes will have different participant because the participant revolve around the process and can inter-act with it through a variety of participant roles [10]. Since only two types of process are found in the student's writing, thus only two types of participant are discovered as well. Here are some examples of participant roles found in the text.

3) *Textual metafunction*: Textual metafunction deals with how speakers try to convey their messages in a way that all the preceding and following information in the clause are connected smoothly while interacting with the listeners [10]. Theme and Rheme will be the focus of analysis in textual metafunction of Argumentative text. The finding of Theme in the student's writing is presented in the table below:

TABLE I. THEME FINDING IN STUDENT'S WRITING

Type of Theme	
Unmarked Topical Theme	3 clauses
Marked Topical Theme	6 clauses
Textual Theme	2 clauses
Interpersonal Theme	-

Based on the findings, it indicates that the student mostly used marked topical Theme. The examples of the Themes found in the text are:

	You	can	chat, video call,	and	communicate	with family or friends abroad with ease
Textual	THEME (Unmarked topical)	RHEME				

	So	my conclusion	is	Social media and the internet	is	a really good medium	for bringing people together for a better cause or just simply communicating between friends.
Textual	THEME (Textual)			RHEME			

From the findings and the examples above, it can be concluded that most of themes exist in the text are marked topical theme since the topical theme is not the subject of the clauses. Most of the sentences are started by prepositional phrase which make the unmarked topical theme appear frequently. Unmarked topical themes are those with the subject as the point of departure of the clauses. For example, in the text, we can find *the internet* and *you*. On the other hand, when conjunctive adjunct is used as a theme, it is called textual themes. We refer to these text-creating meanings as textual theme in order to distinguish them from the experiential meanings in the topical Theme [10].

Regarding the thematic progression, it seems like the students are jumping from one idea to another because there is lack of conjunction and reference that are essential to connect the previous sentence with the following one. New sentence is commonly started with new topical theme without alluding the previous sentence. One of the apparent reason is probably because the student did not elaborate the argument further by providing supporting sentences. Thus, it can be concluded that the student is unable to create a well-developed thematic progression yet.

Based on the analysis in both SFL and traditional manner, it can be found that the major problems students encounter in writing argumentative text are:

- The absence of Subject
- The use of more than one Subject in one sentence
- The absence of finite
- The incorrect use of finites
- Incorrect tense formation
- Inappropriate theme progression
- The errors in spelling and punctuation

Therefore, to address the problems above, the present study proposes the use of Fishbone strategy. Though fishbone strategy main focus is on improving students' writing regarding the presentation of ideas and the organization of the text, other lexico-grammatical problems can be address as well. Teachers' creativity in using this strategy will be highly recommended.

#### D. The Fishbone Strategy

Fishbone strategy is a strategy that uses cause and effect diagram introduced by Dr Kaoru Ishikawa to address problems within the text. This strategy belongs to the diagram-based approach (DBA). In the present study, fishbone diagram is accompanied by construction deconstruction method since it will break down the text first and later construct it again into one unified body of paragraph. Argumentative text deals with problems to be analyzed, and later arguments are presented by the writer related to the problem. Therefore, it is highly significant for the transition of the thesis to the argument to be effortless. By using fishbone diagram, it was expected to assist students to think through all of the possible causes of a problem. Fishbone diagram is a cause effect diagram as a

Systematic tool analysis way of looking at effect and the causes that create effect [15].

The name fishbone is actually used since the diagram resembles the skeleton of a fish. Thus, just like a skeleton of a fish, fishbone diagram consist of parts. Each part represents the head, the body, and the tail of the fish. This particular fact makes it easier to relate the diagram with the elements of argumentative text. As stated earlier in the literature review, the generic structure of argumentative text consists of thesis, argumentation, and conclusion. First, the head of the fish will pose as the topic which will be analyzed in the thesis. Next, the body will pose as the argumentation. Last, the tail will be the

conclusion of the topic discussed. This strategy helps students to find one problem by analyzing the situation.

The problems in the students' writing also reside in the thematic progression. Thematic progression relates to the way students organized their writing. By using fishbone diagram, students can understand information, apply ideas to a new situation, and analyze connection and direction [16]. Moreover, it is argued that fishbone diagram can help to construct some factors that associated with a particular topic and show how they can relate each other. In here, grammatical problems such as Subject, Finite, conjunction, spelling, and tenses can be address as well.

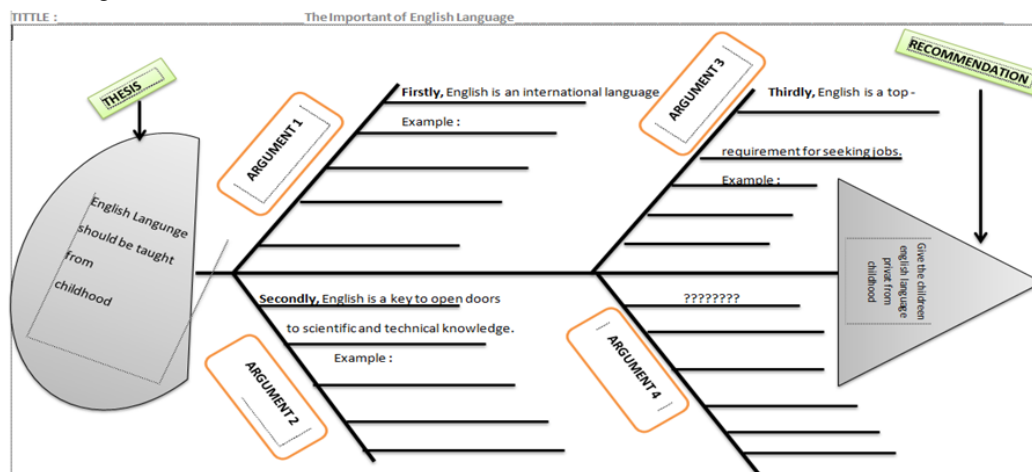


Fig. 1. Fishbone diagram.

Before implementing this strategy, we need to be aware of several matters such as participants, time allocation, and materials to be used. First, the participants of the study students of grade X from one private high school in Bandung. As it is a private school, it has its own set of syllabus in teaching English. Thus, instead of teaching argumentative text at grade XI, it was taught since grade X. This particular fact should be taken into account because unlike other types of text such as narrative and descriptive, argumentative text is relatively new to the students since they have not been taught that in junior high school. Second, based on the syllabus, there are 9 sessions to discuss argumentative text and each session has 45-minute period. Therefore, this lesson is divided into four meetings with 90 minutes long per meeting. The strategy to be implemented should be doable to be conducted in this time frame. Last but not least, the material will be taken from the book called 'Think' published by Cambridge University Press. The book is previously used by the teacher in teaching argumentative text. Instead of using materials from outside, the teacher can use the book which the students already familiar with. Things to be changed is the approach in which the argumentative text is taught.

For more practical manner, the implementation of fishbone strategy will be broken down into four meetings:

1) *1<sup>st</sup> Meeting (introduction of fishbone and argumentative text)*: In the first meeting, teachers will come to the class with a big poster (prepared beforehand) depicting the fishbone

diagram. The focus in the first meeting is not on the students writing but on building the students' comprehension on what should be included in argumentative text. Moving on, the fishbone diagram will be stuck on the whiteboard so that the whole class can see. This is done to grab the students' attention and later engage them in discussing what it is about. After that, without telling the students explicitly about argumentative text, the teacher will come up with one viral issue of written argumentative text that the all students can relate to, for instance, "Coffee is good for our health". Teachers and students collaborate to identify the main problem that will become the thesis of argumentative text. The problems found will be written in the fishbone diagram prepared on the whiteboard. Here, the teacher then briefly explains that a good argumentative text start with a clear issue to discuss and what is the characteristics. Then, the teacher will lead the students to put the thesis it on the head of the fishbone. Next, the teacher encourages the students to find what the main factors that caused the problem and put it on the bone of the fish. After that, the teacher asks the students to list the sub problems of each main argument. In this step, the teacher should emphasize the importance of conjunction and connective words to link one idea to another. Therefore, teachers should list several widely used conjunction in writing argumentative text. It is not necessary to rush into the next step. The point is on the students' comprehension on how the

strategy works. Lastly, the teacher and the students analyzed which one is the conclusion together.

2) *2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting (using the fishbone diagram)*: In the second meeting, the teacher will distribute smaller version of the fishbone diagram to all of the students in the form of papers. The aim of the second meeting is to familiarized the students with the fishbone diagram by working on it individually. After giving the fishbone diagram to each students, teachers divided them into groups and give each group one sample of argumentative text. All of the group will be given similar task which is finding the thesis and putting it on the head, identifying the main problems and putting it on the body, listing the sub problems and putting it on the bones and looking for the conclusion to be put in the tail of the fish. Even though they work in group; students are expected to write on their own fishbone diagram given by the teachers.

3) *3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting (the drafting)*: Finally, on the third meeting, the students will be expected to write their own first draft of argumentative text. By now, it is expected that the students already know the generic structure of argumentative text and what should be put first and later. In the third meeting, the teacher will explain about use of connectives (so, because of, first, second, etc.), use of technical terms relating to the issue, use of timeless present tense, use of variety of verb (process), and use of emotive words (modals such as may, can, should, etc.) in order to help the students to form their sentences. It aims to address the common issue found in the students argumentative writing. The writing will still be done in the diagram to assist them in visualizing what to write and later become their draft to be rewrite and revised.

4) *4<sup>th</sup> Meeting*: As the draft is made from the previous meeting, in the fourth meeting the students will be guided to construct the real argumentative text in the form of paragraph. With the guidance of the written fishbone diagram, the students will start writing from the head which is the thesis, writing the arguments taken from the body of the fishbone diagram and lastly concluding the argument by taking the sentences from the tail of the fish. Next, the written product will be submitted to the teacher to be reviewed in terms of the grammatical errors, mechanic of writing, process, and thematic progression.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The problems in writing argumentative text in the present study come from both the teacher's and students' perspective. From the teacher's perspective, generally the students are seen to be struggling with finding and starting the idea in writing, lacking of vocabulary, and difficulty in harmonizing the paragraph. Meanwhile, from the students' perspective based on the findings, they are struggling with composing good format of paragraph, grammar, and mechanic stuff. These problems, hence, makes it harder to be ignored. Unless alternative ways are explored, the problems in students' argumentative text will remain unresolved. In analyzing an argumentative text, merely

using the traditional way is no longer sufficient. To address these issues as a whole, the analysis in a functional manner is important. Deeper analysis is needed in order to be able to identify the real intention or implied meaning of the text as a whole. SFL analysis offers teachers or linguists with a functional language model to complement modern practice on holistic approaches to the teaching and learning of language. Given the critical importance to entangle the problems in students' argumentative writing, the present study attempts to address those problems by proposing an alternative strategy named Fishbone strategy. The consideration for choosing this strategy is based on the problems found in students writing which can be solved by implementing the fishbone diagram. Diagram-based approach such as this is argued to be beneficial to entangle students' complex problem in writing argumentative text.

#### V. CONCLUSION

In analyzing an argumentative text, merely using the traditional way is no longer sufficient. Deeper analysis is needed in order to be able to identify the real intention or implied meaning of the text as a whole. SFL analysis offers teachers or linguists with a functional language model to complement modern practice on holistic approaches to the teaching and learning of language. If equipped by both the understanding of traditional and functional grammar, the teacher might have better insight in teaching and analyzing a text. The analysis above indicates that student still finds difficulties in writing argumentative text. After breaking down the analysis into several aspects, the problems occur in the subject-verb agreement, punctuation, dictions, and construction of complex sentence. Moreover, from the Systemic Functional Linguistics analysis of metafunction, the Mood, Processes, and Theme can be revealed as well. Thus, an alternative way called fishbone strategy is proposed to address the problems encountered. Ultimately, it is expected that students' difficulties in writing argumentative text will decrease with practice. Finally, it is expected that the findings of this paper to be able to help the students in composing better argumentative text and to be used as reference by the teachers in teaching writing, specifically argumentative text.

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