Organizational Features of Argumentative Composition: A Singapore Study

R V Skuja

Abstract
This study analyses a corpus of argumentative compositions in order to isolate the features of organization pertinent to this genre of writing. A further aim is to compare compositions written by “A” level students and English teachers in order to highlight specific shortcomings of the former.

Despite using more cohesive devices and an over-abundance of lexical repetition, student writing is less coherent. This is largely because of a lack of global links (between paragraphs), and an inability to properly utilize given information in structuring non-narrative writing. Finally, student writing suffers from presentation of content at the expense of discussion of issue and weighing of views.

Introduction
The purpose of this study was to analyse a group of argumentative compositions written by Singapore students with a view to identifying and quantifying the organizational features of these essays. This analysis was undertaken with the expectation that isolation of such features might lead to a better understanding of the inadequacies in student writing which might lead to improvements in the current methodology.

Argumentative compositions have been chosen because they are extremely demanding on students. For the first time, pupils are called upon to structure abstract ideas in their compositions instead of tangible facts or events — a challenge which they have not encountered previously with narrative and descriptive writing. They are now required to examine, to evaluate and to form opinions. They have to assign some degree of weight to these opinions, and they then have to organize them into a coherent discourse which maintains a line of continuity throughout.

Yet, the argumentative type of writing assignment is one of the most commonly set for the General Paper. To further compound the seriousness of failing in this task, writing at this level supersedes all other language skill areas, even reading, as the gauge of student success or failure in examinations. A combination of all these factors has, therefore, led to the choice of argumentative essays as the focus for this study.

Approach Used
Text organization features were examined to see how the students and teachers were handling two aspects of writing: text coherence and the genre conventions of argumentative writing. In order to do this the following features were analysed:

1 Explicit signals of sentence relationships, i.e., grammatical and lexical cohesion.
2 Global links, i.e., between paragraphs.
3 Use of given/new information in discourse thread maintenance.
4 Implicit relationships, i.e., logical sentence links.
5 Awareness of argumentative writing conventions.

Background to Analysis Approach
At the moment there is no discourse model that specifically describes the argumentative genre of school writing, so an analytical framework has to be built up from studies related to the features of the written product. Present studies in discourse analysis are attempting to look beyond the boundaries of the sentence, at the way semantic and grammatical relationships create cohesion and coherence in a text. Another influence on research is the awareness of the interactive nature of texts,
i.e., how audience and purpose affect decisions regarding information organization and language choice.

Dressler and de Beaugrande (1981) in their overview of the field of discourse analysis define text features as those of surface cohesion, the underlying coherence of ideas, the appropriate choice of information for the intended purpose, audience and writing context, the judicious use of given/new information, and the incorporation of conventions associated with particular text types.

A great deal of research has been done with regard to explicit or surface signals of discourse relationships, the major one being Halliday and Hasan's (1976) categorization of grammatical and lexical cohesion of texts. Their study provides the basis for analysing cohesive devices in the present data.

However, it has been generally agreed (Winter 1977, Brostoff 1981, Carrell 1982, Goodwin and Perkins 1982) that surface signals of text relations, i.e., cohesive devices do not necessarily establish coherence. The underlying organization of information and ideas, as well as the maintenance of the continuity of the "discourse thread" (Grimes 1975) are what facilitate the decoding of a text. Such underlying connections are established by clausal relations (Winter 1977, Hoey 1983). These can be explicitly or implicitly signalled (Hoey 1979). The latter relationships can be clarified by paraphrasing the logical connections between clauses/sentences or, by reconstructing the question being answered by the subsequent clause/sentence. The degree to which the writer is able to anticipate the reader's expectations during the text decoding process (i.e., "audience awareness") contributes substantially to the manner in which he structures his text.

Given/new information also has an important function in maintaining the continuity of the discourse thread, especially in expository prose (Vande Kopple 1982, Kress 1982). Without its use semantic/logical gaps occur in the sentence sequencing and these interfere with the establishment of a theme focus. To maximize the readability of texts, the given information, i.e., that already mentioned earlier in the text, should precede new information in a sentence (Vande Kopple 1982).

Writers must combine these local relationships in a complex, yet consistent, overall pattern, based on a well-organized sequence or hierarchy of connections. Such patterning is considered to be central to coherence (Hoey 1983). These patterns are universally present in human cognitive processing of information and yet, despite an infinite number of discourse pattern possibilities, certain ones predominate. One such example is the Situation—Problem—Solution—Evaluation pattern (Hoey 1983). Patterns, i.e., conventions, are also associated with different types of genre, the most formalized and complex of these being those of expository and argumentative writing.

Ongoing research into the writing process is attempting to isolate and quantify the psychological and cognitive factors that bear on the quality of the written product. Insights can be gained from considering the way the levels of difficulty in the demands of genre conventions (Kress 1982) are reflected both in the handling of the process and the quality of the product. Flower and Hayes (1981) have conceptualized a model for the writing process which goes far beyond the usual categories of the pre-writing/writing/post-writing stages. They divide the act of writing into three major aspects of problem-solving governed, firstly, by the nature of the writing task, secondly by the writer's background experience and knowledge, and thirdly by the act of composing or expressing the information into words. Inadequacies in any of these areas will be reflected in the final product.

Data for Analysis

Twenty General Paper compositions on the topic, "Love is All You Need: Is That Right?" were used as the corpus for this analysis. These were written by a class of "A" level students in a Singapore Junior College. Fifteen teachers from England and New Zealand with university qualifications in English also wrote on the same topic.

Since it was not intended to quantify how much "better" the teacher compositions were, it was not deemed necessary to ensure identical writing conditions for both groups. Rather, it was envisaged that the teachers' compositions would serve as a

\[\text{Ongoing research into the writing process is attempting to isolate and quantify the psychological and cognitive factors that bear on the quality of the written product. Insights can be gained from considering the way the levels of difficulty in the demands of genre conventions (Kress 1982) are reflected both in the handling of the process and the quality of the product. Flower and Hayes (1981) have conceptualized a model for the writing process which goes far beyond the usual categories of the pre-writing/writing/post-writing stages. They divide the act of writing into three major aspects of problem-solving governed, firstly, by the nature of the writing task, secondly by the writer's background experience and knowledge, and thirdly by the act of composing or expressing the information into words. Inadequacies in any of these areas will be reflected in the final product.}

\[\text{Data for Analysis}

Twenty General Paper compositions on the topic, "Love is All You Need: Is That Right?" were used as the corpus for this analysis. These were written by a class of "A" level students in a Singapore Junior College. Fifteen teachers from England and New Zealand with university qualifications in English also wrote on the same topic.

Since it was not intended to quantify how much "better" the teacher compositions were, it was not deemed necessary to ensure identical writing conditions for both groups. Rather, it was envisaged that the teachers' compositions would serve as a

1Cohesive devices are classified according to the function of the "tie" in the text. They describe these "ties" as both grammatical and lexical, and group them into the following five categories:

1 Reference — e.g. pronouns, demonstratives, definite articles.
2 Substitution — e.g. by "one". This occurs most frequently in conversation.
3 Ellipsis — or substitution by zero. This occurs most frequently in conversation.
4 Conjunctions — i.e. additive, adversative, causal, temporal.
5 Lexical Cohesion — e.g. synonyms, general nouns, superordinate nouns, repetition, collocation.
comparison or check on the features mishandled or missing from the student writing.

Findings

1 Explicit Signals of Sentence Relations

Using the Halliday and Hasan classification, connectors, pronominals, determiners and lexical repetition occurrences were located and counted. Teacher data was adjusted by a factor of 10,771/6,756 to make it consistent with the pupil data, i.e. to reflect the proportion of occurrences relative to the total words used by each group in their essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pupils</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causal</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additive</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adversative</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronominalization</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determiners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students’ essays, despite the obviously lower level of readability, used more grammatical cohesive devices than the teachers. It was apparent that one had to look elsewhere for the reasons for the difference in writing quality.

Points of conjecture as to why the pupils used more cohesive devices were as follows:

- The fact that pupils wrote more short sentences than teachers implied the need for more connectors.
- For non-narrative writing, there appeared to be an over-reliance on pronominalization to establish sentence relationships. This was partly because the students incorporated more anecdotal/narrative type illustrations in their essays and partly because it reflected a coping strategy in a transition from narrative to expository writing.
- Pupils’ use of “this” differed from that of teachers who used it generally to refer to a foregoing chunk of text, e.g., “But can love alone manage all this?” Pupils tended to refer only to the foregoing sentence, characteristically when they were making a comment about it, e.g., “A patriot will serve his nation whenever necessary. This is especially apparent in times of war.” This practice appeared to reflect a general reluctance to use subordination to construct longer sentences.

Lexical Repetition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Occurrences per Essay (Average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words from Title</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Words</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was apparent that students used twice as much repetition as the teachers and they used it in ways that led to inept text structuring.

Teachers generally employed repetition in a deliberate manner for establishing local and global text relations, as well as for emphasis and disambiguation, i.e., repeating a word in order to avoid any misunderstanding as to the antecedent reference. In most cases repetition was an indicator of given information. Inevitably, a certain amount of unconscious repetition crept into their writing, but this was minimal.

Pupils, on the other hand, exhibited a noticeable tendency to maintain a topic based on repetition of one or more key words over a space of a few sentences. Thereafter, through word association they appeared to drift from one topic cluster to another until the associations were exhausted, whereupon they would typically return to the list of types of love from paragraph “A” and start again. This coping strategy resulted in overlong or overshort paragraphs, depending on how well the associations were flowing.

It seems that the linear influence of the immediate context and the semantic search for tangible equivalences for complex abstract ideas lead to a dependence on lexical repetition for text cohesion. One common example of this was “chaining”, in which the last word of a sentence would become the subject of the next sentence:

I2 Love produces the family unit.
I3 Within the family, love is again evident in the parental and sibling relationships.
I4 The parents have made willing self-sacrifices in order to bring up their children and many have succeeded.
I5 The children in turn ...

Word associations as a basis for discourse organization also meant that often there was minimal addition of new information. This does not mean that there was a lack of factual material, but that
there was a lack of evaluative information, i.e., discussion of implications rather than a recording of content. Where a writer is uncertain about what to say or indeed did not have much to say, or does not possess a mental image of the target text conventions, he then keeps grasping the most readily available comments/words and uses these as building blocks for another sentence.

2 Global Links

There was only rudimentary and sporadic inter-paragraph linking in pupil writing. The global links established were by repetition of single lexical items, listed usually in the initial paragraph of the essay. However, this related to content rather than to issue presentation.

The lack of systematic structuring of a text pattern was one of the most serious problems of student writing. This meant that the reader was left with an impression of a random stringing together of discrete paragraphs associated with the various forms of love, a definition of which usually appeared in an initial paragraph. Such an approach did not come to grips with the issue of “Is love all we need?” Student writing reflected a non-awareness of connecting sentence-level information with the text structuring goals. In contrast, teacher compositions signalled global patterns by the use of given information, especially restatements and summary.

3 Given/New Information

The term “given information” is related to the manner in which information mentioned earlier is reintroduced later into the text for some specific purpose. The possible uses of given information range across a broad spectrum, but fall into three main areas as evidenced by the data examined:

(a) Any short repetition, pronominalization, etc, which provides a cohesive effect through simple anaphoric reference.

(b) A somewhat more extended repetition of prior information which provides a context or foundation for the introduction of new information in a sentence.

(c) A fairly complex restatement or summary in the form of clauses, phrases, or even whole sentences, which reintroduces previous information in a manner specifically structured to highlight a focus against which subsequent new information may be judged in context.

Although teachers’ use of given information was only about a third more extensive than that of students on a word count basis, the nature of the given information was quite different. Particularly evident was the students’ preference for the (a) type given information function in text structuring, some use of the (b) type, and extremely rare examples of the (c) type. Student utilization of nouns and pronominalization amounted to 46.8% of their total given information, as opposed to only 17.0% for teachers. This meant that there was little evident was the students’ preference for the (a) type global links, or acting as a springboard for introducing new information, or for clarifying/highlighting the writer’s views. There was an occasional summing up at the end of a paragraph but the continuity was inevitably broken at the beginning of the next one.

Though teachers at times included seemingly discrete chunks of information, these were retrospectively gathered into the pro/con views being presented and were stylistically intended. Teacher use of phrases and clauses as given information was 66.7% of their total, as against 42.8% for students. This was correspondingly reflected in longer average length of sentences for teachers versus pupils: 23 words vs. 16 words. Short sentences rely on cohesive devices rather than longer restatements to signal links.

The foregoing demonstrates the importance of teaching the function of given information in discourse organization. Aspects related to the amount and quality of given information and the syntactical realization in texts needed to be understood in order to improve the flow of ideas in the pupil’s writing of argumentative essays. It also reflects badly on the practice of teaching grammar points in single sentences rather than short text contexts.

4 Implicit Sentence Relationships

Initial perusal of student compositions revealed that much of the writing was simple, fragmentary and with a general lack of discourse thread maintenance. Any linkages between portions of the text were at best implied.

In an attempt to ascertain the underlying relationships between sentences in an argumentative composition, sentences were classified into types through the use of paraphrasing and questions.
(Winter 1977, Hoey 1983). After this had been completed for all the sentences, it was found that they could all be broadly categorized into 16 types of sentence function appearing in the development of argumentative discourse. These functions were then split into four groups corresponding to Statement, Elaboration, Response and Conclusion. This tentative hierarchy was ordered according to the way these sentences were naturally sequenced in argumentative text organization.

**Hypothetical Sequence of Sentence Relations in the Information Organization of Argumentative Discourse**

(a) **Statement** (i.e. presentation of theme)
   - Textual
   - General
   - Specific
   - Conjectural

(b) **Elaboration** (i.e. clarification)
   - Illustration/example
   - Detail/listing
   - Additional aspects or factors
   - Definition
   - Restatement/reiteration
   - Summary

(c) **Response** (i.e. explanation)
   - Reason
   - Result
   - Contradiction
   - Comment/evaluation
   - Waystage conclusion

(d) **Conclusion** (i.e. to main theme)
   - Conclusion

Next, the occurrences of each type of sentence were totalled separately for pupil and teacher essays, and the percentages of each one relative to the total were calculated.

The Comment and Reason categories represented the largest percentage of sentence types used by both pupils and teachers. These two categories represented 27.9% for pupils and 25.2% for teachers and were expected for argumentative type discourse. However, the two data samples diverged in the use of summary, conclusion and the general statement categories, with important implications for the quality of writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pupils</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waystage</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Statement</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers used more summary type sentences and more concluding statements. In fact, only half of the pupils' essays made an attempt at formulating a conclusion. Pupils tended to make more random conclusions half-way through the essay and then continued on, almost as if they decided that they had not yet written enough.

The most serious difference noted was the use of general statement sentences. It should be recognized that a general statement is an independent proposition not necessarily linked to any foregoing sentence. The great use of this type of sentence means that there is a corresponding decrease in semantic links to other parts of the text and less elaboration of points. For given discourse volume an increased percentage of such sentences necessarily means a corresponding decrease in other types; and such a decrease will most inevitably take place in the Elaboration and Response categories. Typically pupils used a binary sequence of general statement plus commentary sentence. Frequent instances were noted of sentences being out of apparent logical order with the adjoining text and relating instead to a sentence earlier in the same paragraph.

The tendency of student writers to over-use General statements in their essays was at times compounded by instances wherein two or more such statements were strung together, one after another. Without some transitional commentary, the subsequent General statement(s) appeared to be out of sequence; one got distracted by the obvious lack of semantic linkage which caused the coherence of the paragraph to be impaired.

Take an example from pupil essay P1:

**C1** Wisdom and integrity, to me, is just as important as love in the modern societies. (General statement)

**C2** The modern world emphasizes economic development and the specialization of labour. (General statement)
C3 All of us, need wisdom and integrity to adapt ourselves to this fast-changing world. (Comment)

C4 Another important factor in modern living is education. (General statement)

This shows what happens when three General statements are used together with only minor elaboration provided in C3; and this is perhaps the principal reason for school writing being referred to as “thin” or “naive”.

5 Awareness of argumentative writing conventions

Another serious deficiency noted in pupil writing was an apparent inability to come to grips with the need to develop an issue as well as to present a body of content. This resulted in an over-abundance of simple comments on content matter — with particular reference to keywords from the title such as “love” and “need” — at the expense of development of pro and con views in relation to the issue. It was as if the pupil writers were avoiding the abstractions of the overall issue (Is Love All We Need?) and were, instead, writing on parallel topics related to love and its forms and characteristics. This particular deficiency was demonstrated by a survey of pupil writing on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, wherein out of the 20 essays reviewed only four compositions exhibited consistent evidence of pro/con awareness throughout the entire body of the text. Of the rest, eight showed intermittent evidence of such awareness, and the remaining eight showed no such awareness whatsoever. This lack of indication of pro/con views provided little ground on which to base a conclusion. Therefore, pupil conclusions generally appeared to be brief and superimposed rather than having evolved as a result of the foregoing discussion.

Teachers, on the other hand, generally reflected a strong awareness of issue throughout their compositions. In some instances such awareness was not immediately evident in the text; however, they subsequently tied it in to the overall theme and to their own pro/con views. This was a stylistic feature which only the teachers utilized.

In order to provide a uniform format for comparing one essay with another, a graphical representation of sentence functions had been created to show the sequential relations within the discourse. At the same time it would indicate whether the writer was aware of argumentative writing conventions, i.e. pro/con views and the need for a concluding statement. Various patterns were expected to emerge, e.g. presentation of pro views in the early part of the essay and con views in the latter part. On the other hand, each paragraph might contain both pro and con views or alternate paragraphs might express pro views and con views.

Each sentence was recorded according to its function in the appropriate column. Pro or con views were circled green and red, respectively, to highlight their use. At the same time, relationships to sentence either directly preceding, or elsewhere earlier in the text, were indicated by a solid line to denote a clear association; a dotted line to denote a tenuous association, and no line to indicate the lack of any apparent connection to any other sentence in the essay. The net result was a graphical representation in which various features of the discourse could be directly visualized.

Figure 1 represents a successfully organized teacher essay using a pattern in which pro views are expressed in the first half of the essay and offsetting con views in the second half. Both local and global links are consistently maintained throughout the essay. This provides a contrast with the pupil essay in Figure 2 which exhibits problems in all three areas mentioned above.

Concluding Comments

The results of the study confirm that cohesion and sufficient content do not ensure quality writing. These two aspects can be, and are, taught in the classroom, but they do not have any substantial bearing on the inadequacies evident in student work. This study indicates the areas to focus on: genre conventions, audience awareness and cognitive skill development.

In order to properly handle an argumentative essay assignment, students must understand that there is an issue to be addressed; that weighted pro/con views must be presented; that all of these must lead to a reasoned conclusion; and that the whole must be systematically organized into a pattern consistent with argumentative conventions. At present, school methodology does not provide enough explicit illustration of these conventions.

The second major requirement for the structuring of a successful argumentative composition is the awareness of the audience for whom the composition is being written. Without an awareness of another's decoding requirements, the student is unable to choose appropriate information to back his argument or to provide clear
FIGURE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Elaboration</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Elaboration</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
1. Textual
2. General
3. Specific
4. Conjectural
5. Illustration
6. Detail
7. Addition
8. Definition
9. Restatement
10. Summary
11. Reason
12. Result
13. Contradiction
14. Comment
15. Waystage
   Conclusion
16. Conclusion
   Pro View
   Con View
   Neutral View
signals as to how the overall line of persuasion fits together to achieve a final stand.

Thirdly, we must know, since dealing with abstract ideas is new and difficult, that the student will resort to a variety of coping strategies such as dependence on word association to construct new sentences, and on the use of simple commentary sentences about content rather than the use of more complex evaluations related to the overall issue.

In summary, if without an understanding of the genre conventions and reader expectations, pupils will not have appropriate cognitive strategies for coping with the argumentative writing task.

REFERENCES


Carrell, P. L. (Dec 1982), "Cohesion is Not Coherence", *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 16 No. 4


Hoey, M. (1979), *Signalling to Discourse*, (English Language Research, Birmingham).


