

Comparative Genre Analysis of English Argumentative Essays Written by Chinese English and Non-English Major Students

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Abstract

Argumentative writing has long been regarded as an essential mode of written discourse. Despite some studies on argumentative essays across ages, grade levels, cultures and languages, research has not yet been conducted on writers from different academic disciplines in the Chinese context. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the current situation of move-step structure of argumentative essays written by English learners in an EFL context. Two sets of corpus of English argumentative essays written by Tongren University students were built, 100 from English majors and the other 100 from non-English majors. A selected analytical framework was used to analyze the move-step structure of the essays and some linguistic features were also investigated. Results revealed that the majority of the argumentative essays were found to follow the three stages set in the model. Findings also showed some differences in terms of move-step structure between the essays written by these two groups of students. In the conclusion, pedagogical implications informed by these results and findings are offered to benefit teaching argumentative essay writing.

Keywords: *Argumentative essay, Genre analysis, Move-step structure, Linguistic features, English and non-English major students*