

## The Use of Rhetorical Strategies in Argumentative Essays

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### ABSTRACT

The most challenging skill perceived by students when they learn the English language is the writing skill. This recent study would like to identify the rhetorical strategies used by good writers and poor writers. Two participants were selected, and written essays was the instrument employed for this study. Both participants were required to write an essay on 'Should examinations be abolished?' The essays written were analysed using a coding technique. The findings indicated that both writers utilised the three elements, Logos, Ethos and Pathos, differently. Both were considerate to the readers when they wrote the essays and presented their message, which was also heavily emphasised. However, they did not focus on their roles as writers. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that teachers need to help students familiarise themselves with rhetorical strategies. As for students, they should be aware of the rhetorical strategies to enhance their writing skills to write argumentative essays.

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## INTRODUCTION

In learning English, students cannot avoid learning writing skills. A study found that students' perceptions towards learning writing skills are challenging (Badiozaman, 2017). They perceived learning writing skills as challenging and difficult because they were aware that need to consider many elements to write a good essay. Among the elements that they need to consider are syntax, semantic, and pragmatics (Mubarak, 2017). Students face difficulties in learning writing skills due to a low English proficiency. According to Pablo and Lasaten (2018), students with low level of English proficiency would perform poorly in their writing tasks. Poor writers and good writers can be defined in terms of the strategies used by both writers. A poor writer writes low-quality texts due to their inability to detect the errors, while a good writer uses their rhetorical and linguistics knowledge to write a better text (Ferrari et al., 1998). Maharani et al. (2018) further define poor writers as having a lower degree of awareness, belief and proficiency than good writers who have better purposes of learning language, motivation, degree of awareness, and learning style.

In the genre of writing, students have issues in writing argumentative essays because the essay's structure is different compared to the narrative, descriptive and compare and contrast essays (Amer, 2013). Therefore, for students to write a good argumentative essay, they need to consider suitable writing strategies. There are a few types of writing strategies: rhetorical

strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, communicative strategies, and social/affective strategies (Mu, 2005). However, the most suitable writing strategies to be used in writing an argumentative essay are rhetorical strategies. It is because rhetorical strategies are used to ensure that the writers reach out to the readers, and the writers need to consider three elements when using rhetorical strategies which: Pathos, Logos and Ethos (Ramage et al., 2018).

To help the students to write good essays, the teachers need to guide their students with the correct and suitable writing strategies without ignoring the objective of the genre. As mentioned earlier, in teaching how to write argumentative essays, teachers should teach rhetorical strategies because rhetorical strategies are the used to persuade the readers to agree with the arguments made in the essay (Çam, 2015). However, the teachers themselves face difficulties and challenges in teaching argumentative essays. Students are still not equipped with the knowledge of writing where they lack vocabulary, do not master grammar or rule of syntax, the organization, and the mechanics of writing (Sujito & Muttaqien, 2016; Jumariati & Sulisty, 2017). These issues should be addressed to help the students have better writing skills in writing argumentative essays. Thus, there is a need to investigate rhetorical strategies in argumentative essays (Cahyono, 2001).

Studies have been conducted on rhetorical strategies and argumentative essays; however, these studies focused

on non-Malaysian contexts in Germany (Wachsmuth et al., 2018) and Indonesia (Sujito and Muttaqien, 2016). Although Rahmat (2020) investigated the writers in a Malaysian university, she focused on the issues and challenges experienced by these writers in writing argumentative essays. She found that some of the challenges were: writer's anxiety, lack of opportunities to write, lack knowledge on punctuation (full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, and commas), language use (using synonyms/antonyms) and other writing skills (spelling, summarising, paraphrasing, in-text citation, and end-of text citation). Sujito and Muttaqien (2016) also identified differences in fast learners, medium learners and slow learners using rhetorical patterns in argumentative essays: fast learners managed to determine more critical ideas and give reasoning more logically than medium and slow learners. It shows that studies on rhetorical strategies in argumentative essays in Malaysian universities, particularly among writers with different proficiency levels, are scarce. Hence, the main objective of this study was to explore the use of rhetorical strategies by poor and good writers in writing argumentative essays. The research question for this study was: What rhetorical strategies are used by good and poor writers of argumentative essays?

### Literature Review

Arndt (1987), Wender (1991), Victori (1995), Riazi (1997) and Sasaki (2000) argued for different strategies in writing essays in the context of language learners.

These studies mainly suggested that language learners employed different writing strategies, categorised in different categories except Wenden (1991) and Riazi (1997), who categorised the different writing strategies from a theoretical stance. However, Mu (2005) argues that the different categories could highly likely be confusing, particularly for language learners. Mu (2005) also suggests that effective writers employ the taxonomy of ESL writing strategies: rhetorical, meta-cognitive, cognitive, communicative and social/affective strategies. To reiterate, students must master relevant writing strategies suitable for different genres of writing. This study employed the theory of rhetorical strategy proposed by Ramage et al. (2016), and the supporting theories employed were Mu (2005), Larenas et al. (2017) and Nimehchisalem (2018).

Rhetorical strategies are related to Aristotelian theories of Logos, Ethos and Pathos. These three elements commonly focus on how a speech should be conducted (Lutzke & Henggeler, 2009). According to Aristotle's theory of Logos, Ethos and Pathos in a speech, Logos focuses on the message that speakers would like to convey. Speakers need to ensure that the message is clear and easy to understand by the audience. Ethos plays the same important role when speakers deliver their speeches as they need to establish their role and credibility in delivering the information or knowledge. Speakers need to ensure that the audiences believe in what they say. They need to build trust and rapport

with the audience. Lastly, Pathos serves a significant role for speakers because they need to grab the audience's attention to comprehend the message delivered. They can also relate the information provided with their schemata. It is crucial because if the audience cannot relate to the information, they may ignore the speech. These three concepts, Logos, Ethos and Pathos, apply to writers too. When writers write an essay or a composition, they need ensure that the message they want to convey is well-delivered to the readers. At the same time, they need to develop their credibility in writing good arguments supported with strong evidence. It is one of the ways writers initiate their role as credible and trustworthy writers. They also need to ensure that the readers understand the writing or essay. Hence, writers are suggested to write matters related to readers' background knowledge. From these explanations, the elements of Logos, Ethos and Pathos can be applied to both spoken and written forms of communication.

Mu (2005, p.3) and Mu and Carrington (2007, p.2) define rhetorical strategies as "strategies that writers use to organise and to present their ideas in writing conventions acceptable to native speakers of that language". Mu (2005) proposes four sub-strategies for rhetorical strategies: organisation, use of L1, formatting/modelling and comparing. Mu further defines an organisation as 'beginning/development/ending' while L1 is defined as 'translating generated idea into ESL'. Modelling is then defined as 'genre

consideration,' and 'different rhetorical conventions' is the definition of comparing. Larenas et al. (2017) further add the sub-strategies: organising ideas, code-switching and translating. They also found that their participants employed different strategies before and after process-based writing intervention (thinking aloud protocol).

To reiterate, Logos, Ethos, and Pathos are applicable to be used in writing argumentative essays. Ramage et al. (2016) classify Logos as logical appeal, Ethos as ethical appeal and Pathos as emotional appeal. According to them, these three elements are called the rhetorical triangle (Figure 1).

Figure 1 describes that the three main elements, Logos, Ethos and Pathos, are interconnected suggesting that the triangle may not be complete if one element is missing. Therefore, the rhetorical triangle is symmetrical: all three strategies are significant in writing argumentative essays. Wachsmuth et al. (2018) suggest that mastering the rhetorical strategies would help writers persuade and convince the readers better. Hence, all these elements are crucial to be considered by writers. Wachsmuth et al. (2018) argue that writers synthesise the text using these three elements: selecting content in argumentative discourse units, arranging the structure and phrasing the style. Despite not using Logos, Ethos and Pathos elements (Ramage et al., 2016), and Abdullah et al. (2014) illustrate the importance of knowing and using rhetorical strategies in writing academic research as academic research has a similar

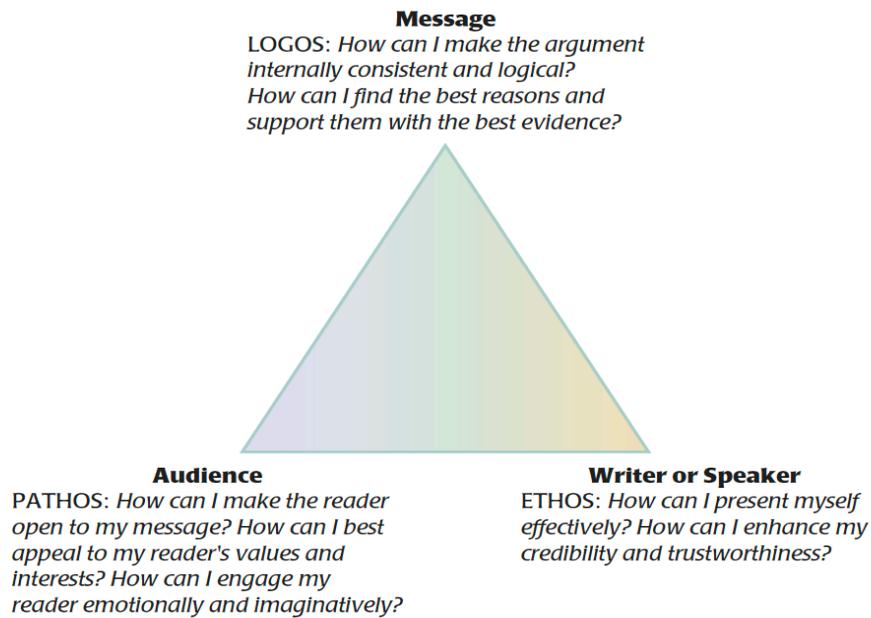


Figure 1. Rhetorical Triangle (Ramage et al., 2016, p. 55)

structure to argumentative essays (Ozfidan & Mitchell, 2020). However, focusing too much on one strategy may sway writers from their focus or purpose of writing argumentative essays. Therefore, they need to cover all three main elements and strategies in writing argumentative essays.

Ramage et al. (2016) stated that Logos, or the message, needs to be consistent and logical when the writer explains their writing. At the same time, the ideas need to be justified with strong support, and consequently, the ideas will indirectly appeal to the readers' needs. Abdullah et al. (2014) assert that writers need to ensure that the goal or purpose of writing essays is achieved where most statements must be well-explained, elaborated and supported with credible evidence. Abdullah et al.

(2019) and Campbell and Filimon (2018) supported this by suggesting students argue their ideas in their essays with strong support and evidence. For instance, Abdullah et al. (2019) found that writers who use more citations would use more rhetorical strategies than those who use fewer citations. In other words, when writers use more citations, they may be able to persuade readers to agree with their points and arguments, and indirectly, they use rhetorical strategy, logos to appeal to the readers to understand and agree with the arguments provided. Hence, they suggest that rhetorical strategy, logos, is used in writing argumentative essays as writers want readers to be attracted to read the essay and agree with the arguments made. Sujito and Muttaqien (2016) and Ahmad et al. (2019)

also discovered that students could not use the concepts of coherence and cohesion because they could not follow the flow of the argumentative essays. Consequently, they suggest that students will need some improvement, especially in connecting the ideas to apply the concepts of coherence and cohesion. Wachsmuth et al. (2018) suggest writers should use 70% Logos rhetorical strategy in their essay because messages are the most important part of writing the argumentative essay. They need to be logical in delivering the message and use their reasoning skills correctly.

The second element, Ethos, requires writers to be credible, and at the same time, they need to be seen as reliable and fair (Ramage et al., 2016). Nimehchisalem (2018) further defines Ramage, Bean and Johnson's ethos as good sense, goodwill, good morals. Even though the writers would like to persuade the readers to agree with their arguments, they also need to highlight the alternative views where readers could judge. Ethos is where writers need to ensure their reputation as wise and credible writers in delivering their arguments or thoughts. Wachsmuth et al. (2018) further argue that writers should use 10% Ethos in writing their argumentative essays.

Pathos requires writers to identify the intended audience before they write (Ramage et al., 2016). For example, if the marketing team wants to write an advertisement, they need to ensure that the words and phrases capture the readers' or the consumers' attention. The same method needs to be employed by writers,

such as students, who write argumentative essays. Abdullah et al. (2014) discover that writers need to consider the element of readership where the focus would be on the audience: whether they can comprehend and understand the information. In other words, students need to make their lecturers understand their arguments, and they also need to guarantee that the lecturers can relate to the arguments delivered with their schemata. The students can grab the teachers' attention by relating the points or arguments with teachers' values, beliefs and experiences. Wachsmuth et al. (2018) assert that writers need to include 20% Pathos in argumentative essays.

In writing argumentative essays, writers need to know how to utilise rhetorical strategies as the general structure of argumentative essays is almost similar to academic writing. Writers need to provide arguments where readers can comprehend and be attracted to the arguments provided. Rhetorical strategies used in argumentative essays are similar to the ones used by advertising companies for certain brands. According to Moore (2020), the most popular brands globally, such as Coca-Cola, Nike, John Deere, and Nivea, were listed as the 2019 world's most valuable brands. He discovered that the brands use rhetorical strategies in promoting and marketing their products. The most used strategy is Pathos, followed by Ethos and Logos. These brands used Pathos the most is because this element or strategy focuses on the audience, and it goes back to the purpose of the brand advertisement,

which is to promote their brand. In relation to writing argumentative essays, this is similar to studies done by Nguyen (2019) and Varpio (2018), which found that writers focused on the audiences when writing their argumentative essays. Similarly, writers need to use rhetorical strategies when writing argumentative essays. They need to understand the goal, task and targeted audience as it will help the writers achieve their purpose of writing argumentative essays. Thus, rhetorical strategies are suggested to be used in the teaching and learning of writing argumentative essays.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Approach and Instrumentation

The research approach used in this research was a qualitative research approach utilising students' writing (essays) as the means to collect the data. In order to collect the

data, two (2) students were approached and requested to write an essay entitled 'Should examinations be abolished?'. After the students wrote the essay, the essays were analysed using a 'Rhetorical Strategies' descriptor which was adopted and adapted from Mu (2005), Ramage et al. (2018), Larenas et al. (2017) and Nimehchisalem (2018), as discussed in Rhetorical strategies are used in arguments to persuade the readers by using logical reasoning which affects the audiences' ethics and emotions (Wachsmuth et al., 2018). There are many rhetorical strategies used in argumentative essays; however, in this research, only three main elements were chosen: logos which focuses on the message, ethos which refers to the writer's credibility and pathos refers to the audience's emotions (Ramage et al., 2018; Nurjanah, 2016). The rhetorical strategies adopted and adapted are as follows:

Rhetorical strategy	Sub-strategy	Description of the strategy
Logos	ASWD	Arguments are supported and well-developed
	AUPA	Arguments are used to persuade the audience
	ASDA	Arguments are suitable to be comprehended by different audiences
	AIE	Arguments are stated implicitly or explicitly
	ALTV	Alternative views are given in explaining the arguments
	CGRE	The claim is supported with good reasons and evidence
	EUE	Evidence is used effectively
	CRDCE	Claims, rebuttals, and data are provided clearly and efficiently
	IOA	Ideas are organised accordingly (Beginning-Development-Ending)
	PRC	Problematic arguments are immediately changed to memorable arguments

Rhetorical strategy	Sub-strategy	Description of the strategy
Ethos	WC	The writer is credible enough to evaluate the topic/the issue
	WT	The writer is trustworthy to the intended audience
	TAS	The tone used by the writer is appropriate and suitable for the audience to understand the information/points/ideas
	WE	The writer has expertise in the field of discussion
	WPBV	The writer provides both views on the issue/the topic discussed (agreement vs disagreement)
	TLSGI	Text length and sentence complexity give impact to the presented arguments and the audience
	LWS	Language choices and word choices are suitable to be used
	PAC	Problematic arguments are immediately changed to memorable arguments
	CS	The writer is uses code-switching in explaining the information/ points/ideas
	GA	Genre awareness can be identified in the text
	DRC	Different rhetorical conventions are used in the text
	TFGMW	The text focuses on good sense, good morals and goodwill
Pathos	TCV	The text gives the audience to connect with their values
	TPB	The text persuades the audiences to evaluate the arguments based on their beliefs
	TPOA	The text provides opportunities for the audience to make assumptions
	TTPA	The text focuses on the task, purpose, and audience

These sub-strategies were utilised when analysing the writings of the two participants, where a frequency of 880 was found.

### Sample

The two participants for this study were purposively chosen as they were in their second semester, where they had learnt how to write argumentative essays in one of their courses during their first semester. The course required students to argue a

topic with valid evidence by citing previous studies. The selection of participants was also based on their proficiency level, where their Malaysian University English Test (MUET) result was considered. Those with Band 4 and above are considered good writers, while those with Band 3 and below are considered poor writers. Their results in the courses as recommended by their lecturer were also a part of the selection criteria. Those who obtained B and below are considered poor writers, while those

obtaining B+ and above are considered good writers. Therefore, to be considered good writers, students must meet both selection criteria. In this research, the participants were required to write an argumentative essay entitled, ‘Should examinations be abolished?’ utilised by Zainuddin and Rafik-Galea (2016).

## FINDINGS

The extracts in this section were taken verbatim where they were written without making corrections. The frequency of the strategies used by the writers was taken into consideration to determine whether a strategy is most often or least often used.

### The Rhetorical Strategies Used by Good and Weak Writers in Argumentative Essay

**Logos (Message).** For Logos, it was found that both writers mostly used ASWD, AUPA, ASDA and AIE sub-strategies when writing the argumentative essays with the frequency of 88, 70, 86 and 55, respectively. In contrast, the least used sub-strategies for Logos are ALTV, CGRE, EUE, CRDCE and IOA, where the frequencies are 5, 10, 12, 13 and 25, respectively.

#### *The Most Used Strategies.*

Extract 1: ASWD - Arguments are supported and well-developed.

For the ASWD sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 56 times while the poor writer only used it 32 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Examinations have been a practice in schools and universities throughout the centuries, as most of people have been through the examinations for years, people have been through the sleepless nights of preparation and memorizing facts about their subject, and it is believed that exams help students to enhance their knowledge capability
Poor writer:	Examination has been a method to measure one capability to understand and remember what has been taught by the teacher

Based on Extract 1, both writers did support and develop their arguments. However, it was not supported with strong evidence, and at the same time, it can be seen that the poor writer wrote a shorter sentence than the good writer. Therefore, the data could be interpreted to show that these two writers only used their background knowledge in supporting their ideas in writing argumentative essays. However, they should support their ideas with facts such as previous research or statistics.

Extract 2: AUPA - Arguments are used to persuade the audience

The good writer used the AUPA sub-strategy 51 times, while the poor writer only used it 19 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	According to Ferrer (2016), one of the major benefits of examinations is that they encourage students to learn.
Poor writer:	According to Vasugi (2019), school should abolish the exam because student will continue to get stressed even after the exam.

For the second extract, both writers used their arguments to persuade the readers or audiences by giving strong support with an in-text citation. Extract 2 suggests that writers were aware that they needed proof or strong evidence to support their points and ideas, indicating that they were familiar with the argumentative essay convention.

Extract 3: ASDA - Arguments are suitable to be comprehended by different audience

For the ASDA sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 55 times while the poor writer only used it 31 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Apart from that, examinations will be able to help a student to know where their weaknesses is and it will motivate them to improve more on the next trial.
Poor writer:	Student make bad choice during and before examination by staying up late and neglect their daily need such as eating and drinking.

It can also be seen in Extract 3 that both writers used an argument that was suitable to be comprehended by different audiences. In addition, they gave examples that may be related to the audience for a better understanding of the argument or content they were making. It implies that writers consider their audiences or readers when writing the essay to ensure that the message or information is well-delivered.

Extract 4: AIE - Arguments are stated implicitly or explicitly

The good writer used the AIE sub-strategy 52 times, while the poor writer only used it 3 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	The reason why exams is a good way of assessments is that examinations will be able to improve the position of a weak student because of the disciplinary that they will apply to begin their success through the examination and after a few of trials and errors, they will not stand in the middle again.
Poor writer:	First and foremost, I think that examination should be abolish because exam does not show one's capabilities.

Based on the extract above, the good and poor writers managed to give arguments implicitly and explicitly based on their opinions. This extract indicates that good writers understood that their opinion should be explained further as it will help readers

have a better understanding of the points stated.

***The Least Used Strategies.***

Extract 5: ALTV - Alternative views are given in explaining the arguments

The good writer used the ALTV sub-strategy four times, while the poor writer only used it once.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	There are a few pros and cons of having examinations such as it can motivate students to study hard and it is a good way of assessments, however: there is also cons of having examinations such as affect a person's mental health.
Poor writer:	In my opinion, I partially agree that examination should be abolish because exam does not show ones capabilities, the pressure of performing well and exam make people better at the subject.

Extract 5 refers to whether the authors posted the ideas for both sides of the argument. Based on the transcript, both writers did discuss positive and negative points of the topic where both writers wrote them at the end of their introduction as their thesis statement. Therefore, this extract could be interpreted to show that both writers know the main structure of an argumentative essay where they included the thesis statement, which would help them to avoid writer's block.

Extract 6: CGRE - Claim is supported with good reasons and evidence

CGRE sub-strategy was employed 6 times by the good writer and 4 times by the poor writer.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	According to Ferrer (2016), one of the major benefits of examinations is that they encourage students to learn.
Poor writer:	According to Sani (2019), the student who have gone through the school system and graduated lacked lack the soft skill and critical thinking.

Extract 7: EUE - Evidence is used effectively

For the EUE sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 6 times while the poor writer also used it 6 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	According to Kocayörük and Telef (2015), exams can damage the happiness of a student. It is after seen in the community where a student intelligence symbolise the family's name. If they perform badly in their examinations, they will be seen as a disgrace to their family.

Poor writer: According to Ferrer (2016), examination is a great way to show their capabilities in the classroom.

Extract 8: CRDCE - Claims, rebuttals and data are provided clearly and efficiently

The good writer used the CRDCE sub-strategy 6 times, while the poor writer used it 7 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	According to Talib et al. (2018), exams are typically seen as a good way of testing course knowledge
Poor writer:	According to IT Learning and Development (2017) although the line between different form of assessments, test and evaluation are not always clear.

Based on Extracts 6, 7 and 8, both writers also used the evidence effectively to support their claims and arguments from reliable resources by giving reliable in-text citations even though some in-text citations did not follow the correct format. Both writers understood they needed to ensure that they support their statements with evidence and not solely based on their prior knowledge or opinions, especially when writing an argumentative essay. In other words, both writers were aware that they needed to argue and persuade readers by showing their credibility in providing the information.

Extract 9: IOA - Ideas are organised accordingly (Beginning – Development - Ending)

For the IOA sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 15 times, while the poor writer only used it 10 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Thus, students are well-informed not only in the subjects that they are interested in, but also in the subjects that they find it difficult with.
Poor writer:	In conclusion, I partially agree that examination should be abolish.

Extract 9 shows that both authors organised their ideas accordingly, using discourse markers to guide the readers or the audiences to understand the text better. Thus, it implies that both writers understood discourse markers and knew that the markers would help readers comprehend the messages better.

Ethos (Writer). For Ethos, it was found that both writers mostly used three sub-strategies: WC (87 times), WT (88 times) and TAS (88 times), while the least used sub-strategies are WE (3 times), WPBV (5 times), TLSGI (4 times) and LWS (1 time).

### ***The Most Used Strategies.***

Extract 10: WC – Writer is credible enough to evaluate the topic/the issue

For the WC sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 57 times, while the poor writer only used it 30 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	However, some people believe that examination should not be treated as a tool to define a person's level of intelligence.
Poor writer:	This can be proven when the teaching become unbalance between teaching in a standard way and teaching more to the student skill.

Based on Extract 10, both writers showed that they were credible writers who wrote their ideas and opinions. However, it would be better to support their arguments and opinions with strong evidence such as past studies. It indicates that the writers focused only on their opinions showing their credibility in evaluating the issue. However, it may not satisfy the readers' needs to agree with the writers.

Extract 11: WT - Writer is trustworthy to the intended audience

The WT sub-strategy was used 57 times by the good writer, while the poor writer only used it 31 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Thus, students are well-informed not only in the subjects that they are interested in, but also in the subjects that they find it difficult with.

Poor writer:	Beside that, I think that examination should be abolish because examination cause pressure for the student to perform well.
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From extract 11, both writers would also be considered trustworthy based on the given opinion on their discussed idea.

Extract 12: TAS – Tone used by the writer is appropriate and suitable for the audience to understand the information/points/ideas.

The good writer used the TAS sub-strategy 57 times, while the poor writer only used it 31 times.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Examinations will encourage students to study and learn in a subject that they need to.
Poor writer:	It is another way of showing how much progress they have done and measure their understanding and the ability to apply it in the exam.

Based on Extract 12, the tone used by the good and poor writer is suitable for an argumentative essay as both gave relevant opinions on the topic.

Extracts 11 and 12 suggest that both writers considered their readers when writing the essay. The writers would ensure that messages are well-delivered to the

readers by explaining their opinions related to the readers' experiences and considering the tone of their writing.

***The Least Used Strategies.***

Extract 13: WE – The writer has expertise in the field of the discussion

For the WE sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 3 times while the poor writer did not employ the sub-strategy.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	There are a few pros and cons of having examinations such as it can motivate students to study hard and it is a good way of assessments, however: there is also cons of having examinations such as affect a person's mental health.

However, in terms of the writer's expertise, it can only be seen in the essay written by the good writer where the writer was clear with the topic discussed and understood the task and the issue that the writer had to complete.

Extract 14: WPBV - Writer provides both views on the issue/the topic discussed (agreement vs disagreement)

The WPBV sub-strategy was employed 3 times by the good writer, and the poor writer only used it twice.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Examinations have been a practice in schools and universities throughout the centuries, as most of people have been through the examinations for years, people have been through the sleepless nights of preparation and memorizing facts about their subject and it is believed that exams help students to enhance their knowledge capability. However, some people believe that examination should not be treated as a tool to define a person's level of intelligence.
Poor writer:	In my opinion, I partially agree that examination should be abolish because exam does not show ones capabilities, the pressure of performing well and exam make people better at the subject.

Both writers also provided ideas on the issues of the topic discussed, referring to Extract 14.

Extract 15: TLSGI - Text length and sentence complexity give impact to the presented arguments and the audience

For the TLSGI sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 4 times, while the poor writer did not utilise it.

Participant Transcriptions  
 Good writer: The reason why exams is a good way of assessments is that examinations will be able to improve the position of a weak student because of the disciplinary that they will apply to begin their success through the examination and after a few of trials and errors, they will not stand in the middle again.

Based on Extract 15, it can only be seen that the idea in the good writer's transcription was written with a more complex sentence and lengthier.

Extract 13, Extract 14 and 15 indicate that only the good writer managed to fulfil these rhetorical strategies. However, the good writer managed to show her understanding of the task leading her to compose better ideas and points. Furthermore, the good writer also wrote longer sentences compared to the poor writer. It shows that a good writer has knowledge of different types of sentences which helps her write and combine ideas by writing more complex sentences and consequently help readers understand the issue better.

Pathos (Audience). It was found that both writers mostly used two sub-strategies: TCV (83 times) and TPB (83 times), while the least used sub-strategies are TPOA (55 times) and TTPA (49 times).

***The Most Used strategies.***

Extract 16: TCV - The text allows the audience to connect with their values

For the TCV sub-strategy, the good writer used the strategy 53 times, while the poor writer utilised it 30 times.

Participant Transcriptions  
 Good writer: Even though examinations stand as good as it seems, however, there is a negative effect from having examinations.  
 Poor writer: They will worry about the score and also they will push themselves harder when they do not score well.

Based on Extract 16, both writers were writing by considering the readers' or the audiences' values.

Extract 17: TPB - The text persuades the audiences to evaluate the arguments based on their beliefs

The good writer also used the TPB sub-strategy 53 times, while the poor writer utilised it 30 times.

Participant Transcriptions  
 Good writer: One of the negative effects of having examinations is examination can cause mental health.  
 Poor writer: This can be seen when the student get ther test paper, they can identify their weakness.

Other than that, in Extract 17, both writers also considered their readers' and audience's beliefs in composing their ideas.

Extracts 16 and 17 imply that both writers attempted to argue and persuade the audience and readers by highlighting the ideas and points that meet readers' values and beliefs. By doing this, the writers could assist the readers to understand the issue better as they could relate their values and beliefs to the issue.

***The Least Used Strategies.***

Extract 18: TPOA - The text provides opportunities to the audiences to make assumptions

The good writer also used the TPOA sub-strategy 49 times, while the poor writer only utilised it 6 times. It shows a big difference in the number of times both writers used the strategies.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Exams can push students to be mentally ill because during day and night, they will have to study hard and everytime, only one job is reading, studying, reading and studying continuously.
Poor writer:	Student make bad choice during and before examination by staying up late and neglect their daily need such as eating and drinking.

Good and poor writers allowed the readers and audience to make assumptions based on the readers' point of view. The extract suggests that both writers let the

readers decide whether to agree or disagree with the statements given. Consequently, readers were allowed to evaluate the issue independantly with some attempt of persuasion from the writers.

Extract 19: TTPA - The text focuses on the task, purpose, and audiences

The good writer used the TTPA sub-strategy 49 times, while the poor writer did not employ the strategy when writing.

Participant	Transcriptions
Good writer:	Students do not realise that pushing themselves to study hard will not do them good as they can perform poorly during the real examinations as they lack of focus and concentration during the test.

Extract 19 indicated that only the good writer focused on task, purpose and audience in writing the essay. It suggests that a good writer would consider all the three aspects when writing argumentative essays as it would help her be on track with the topic while writing the essay.

**Discussion**

Based on the findings of this current study, the researchers discussed the results according to each element of rhetorical strategies, i.e., logos (message), ethos (writer) and pathos (audience). For the first element, logos, writer must focus on the message, the issue or the argument that she

or he would like to highlight (Ramage et al., 2016). There are four Logos rhetorical strategies that were most used by the writers which were:

- i. ASWD - Arguments are supported and well-developed
- ii. AUPA - Arguments are used to persuade the audience
- iii. ASDA - Arguments are suitable to be comprehended by different audience
- iv. AIE - Arguments are stated implicitly or explicitly

Both the good and poor writers managed to support and develop their arguments. They were able to persuade their audiences by making sure that their arguments were comprehensible to different audiences. It is in accordance with research was done by Abdullah et al. (2019), Campbell and Filimon (2018) and Wachsmuth et al. (2018), wherein their research, ELL students, manage to write arguments using suitable strategies. It also suggests that both writers employed four of the Logos rhetorical strategies successfully, and they emphasised making their argument appealing to the readers as suggested by Ramage et al. (2016) by providing relevant evidence and information that is relatable to the reader. Both writers could also be interpreted as emphasising Logos as asserted by Abdullah et al. (2014): writers' arguments need to be well-elaborated and supported with substantial evidence.

There are five rhetorical strategies that the writers least used in writing their argumentative essays, which were:

- i. ALTV - Alternative views are given in explaining the arguments
- ii. CGRE - Claim is supported with good reasons and evidence
- iii. EUE - Evidence is used effectively
- iv. CRDCE - Claims, rebuttals and data are provided clearly and efficiently
- v. IOA - Ideas are organised accordingly (Beginning – Development - Ending)

Despite not using much of these strategies, they elaborated their ideas from different perspectives. Both writers managed to support their arguments with reliable sources, even though there was an error in writing the in-text citation done by the poor writer. Both writers also managed to write their argumentative essays coherently and cohesively by using appropriate discourse markers, which is not parallel with the findings found by Ahmad et al. (2019), Rahmat (2020) and Sujito and Muttaqien (2016), where students were not able to follow the concept of coherence and cohesion. However, there are some grammatical errors done by both writers where the poor writer made more errors compared to the good writer.

Although both writers only utilise 40% of Logos rhetorical strategies in writing the argumentative essays, more emphasis on the message can still be seen. It could be interpreted similarly to what Wachsmuth

et al. (2018) suggest: the Logos element needs to be used more than other elements, suggesting that the good writer wrote the argumentative essay focusing more on the message to be delivered. Some differences between the poor and good writers were also found in the number of times some sub-strategies were used. For instance, there is a difference of 24 times between the writers for the Logos ASWD sub-strategy, where the good writer was found to utilise the sub-strategy more. Nonetheless, the difference is similar for other sub-strategies: AUPA and ASDA. One sub-strategy with a high difference in number is AIE, where the good writer used the sub-strategy 17 times more than the poor writer. However, the difference is small in the least used strategies, suggesting that both writers used these sub-strategies similarly.

The next element is Ethos, where the writers need to ensure that the audiences would be on the writers' side by showing their credibility (Ramage et al., 2016).

Both writers mostly used the following Ethos rhetorical sub-strategies:

- i. WC - The writer is credible enough to evaluate the topic/the issue
- ii. WT - The writer is trustworthy to the intended audience
- iii. TAS - The tone used by the writer is appropriate and suitable for the audience to understand the information/points/ideas

It indicates that writers understood their roles in ensuring that the audiences believed

in their arguments by showing that they were credible and trustworthy. At the same time, when reading the essay, the writers' tone was suitable to persuade the audiences to agree with the writers' arguments. It is similar to the finding of Nguyen (2019), whose study found that students from Thailand understood their roles as a writer.

However, it is found that the least Ethos rhetorical strategies used were:

- i. WE - The writer has expertise in the field of the discussion
- ii. WPBV - The writer provides both views on the issue/the topic discussed (agreement vs disagreement)
- iii. TLSGI - Text length and sentence complexity give impact to the presented arguments and the audience

In providing the ideas for the issues for both views, both good and poor writers wrote it in the introduction as asserted by Ramage et al. (2016), who emphasise that writers need to provide readers with the opportunity to make their judgement by providing alternative views. However, in portraying the expertise and writing lengthier and complex sentences, these strategies were only shown by the good writer.

Both writers utilised 30% Ethos rhetorical strategies, which is different from the only 10% suggested by Wachsmuth et al. (2018). Vast differences were found in some sub-strategies used between the poor and good writers. For instance, there is a difference of 26 times between the writers

for the WT and TAS sub-strategies under the Ethos element, where the good writer was found to utilise both sub-strategies more. It could be interpreted as the good writer managing to show his/her trustworthiness as a writer as Ramage et al. (2016) and Nimehchisalem (2018) argue the importance of the writer's ethical appeal. Nevertheless, the difference is similar for other sub-strategies. However, in the least used strategies, the difference is how the good writer used the three sub-strategies: WE, TLSGI and LWS, but the poor writer did not, suggesting the relative difference in awareness of the strategies and the skills the different writers may possess. In other words, the poor writer's proficiency in writing argumentative essays is more prominent from his/her use of the Ethos rhetorical strategies or lack of, as he/she did not manage to ensure his/her credibility in arguing their thoughts well (Ramage et al., 2016). Similarly, Sujito and Muttaqien (2016) also found that writers' proficiency affects their ability to write argumentative essays well as they may not be able to incorporate rhetorical strategies successfully.

Finally, the third element is pathos, focusing on the readers as the audience. The most used Pathos rhetorical strategies were:

- i. TCV - The text gives the audiences to connect with their values
- ii. TPB - The text persuades the audiences to evaluate the arguments based on their beliefs

Both writers successfully utilised these sub-strategies well due to their awareness that other people would read their essays. In other words, they are aware of the need to provide better understanding for their intended readers, which is parallel to Abdullah et al.'s (2014) assertion that writers need to consider who their readers are. Hence, when they wrote their essays, they considered the audiences' values and beliefs so that the content would be suitable for intended readers (Ramage et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, the least used rhetorical strategies were:

- i. TPOA - The text provides opportunities to the audiences to make assumptions
- ii. TTPA - The text focuses on the task, purpose, and audiences

Despite Wachsmuth et al. (2018) suggesting that 20% of Pathos rhetorical strategies need to be used when writing argumentative essays, both writers utilised 30%. The poor and good writers were found to be different in their use of the sub-strategies under Pathos. For example, both writers used TCV and TPB sub-strategies in relatively similar ways. However, there is a difference in the number of times they employed the sub-strategies: 30 and 53, respectively. Both good and poor writers gave the audiences opportunities to make assumptions when they read the essay. It is important to consider readers when writers write a composition (Varpio, 2018; Ramage et al., 2016; Abdullah et al., 2014).

However, only a good writer focuses on the task, purpose, and audience when writing the essay. This is similar to what Sujito and Muttaqien (2016) argued, where poor and good writers use rhetorical strategies differently, with good writers able to be more critical and logical compared to poor writers. The findings suggest that both writers are different where the good writer used more TPOA sub-strategies than the poor writer six times. Other than that, the good writer used TTPA sub-strategies, and the poor writer did not, suggesting differences in knowledge and skills between the two writers.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, based on the results, both good and poor writers were considerate towards the readers when they wrote the essays, and the writers were also focusing on the message they wanted to deliver. It means that as long as the message was delivered clearly to the audiences, the writers considered the essays as good essays. However, the writers were not paying attention to showing their credibility as writers when writing the essays. Nonetheless, the writers must ensure that they must consider all the three elements of logos (message), ethos (writer) and pathos (audience) if they want to write a better argumentative essay.

This study implicates teachers and students in their teaching and learning experience of writing. Teachers are encouraged to expose the students to correct rhetorical strategies to be used when

writing argumentative essays. It will allow students to learn and consequently master how to use the strategies when writing and improve their critical thinking skills as the rhetorical strategies are related to thinking skills. The teaching of rhetorical strategies to students directly implicates the students writing experience. Students are encouraged to not only be familiar with rhetorical strategies but also master them and their usage. It is especially important for writing argumentative essays for the message to be delivered and explained successfully. Hence, this current research would suggest having more in-depth data by utilising interviews as the instrument for future research. Students must master and employ rhetorical strategies when writing essays regardless of the audience they are writing for (Warschauer, 2010). According to Nimehchisalem (2018), students' use of these strategies is personal and subjective, which could be different for each student. It suggests that teachers play a crucial role in designing activities that expose students to writing strategies. As students develop their own writer's profile, they would try different strategies to become effective writers of the English language.

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