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Coherence in the Argumentative Essays of First Year College of Liberal Arts Students at De La Salle University

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Abstract: The study investigates five textual features of coherence in the students' argumentative essays for text comprehensibility and overall writing quality. Specifically, it examines (1) how comprehensible the students' argumentative essays considering the following: (a) Focus, (b) Organization, (c) Cohesion, (d) Support and Elaboration, and (e) Conventions; and (2) the relationship between the textual features and the comprehensibility of the students' argumentative essays. The data consists of 13 argumentative essays written in ENGLCOM class first year College of Liberal Arts students of De La Salle University. Two techniques were used to analyze the data. First, an analytic and holistic scorings using a four-point writing rubric were used to evaluate each of the textual features of coherence and comprehensibility, respectively. Second, correlational analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the coherence features and the comprehensibility of the students' texts and between the comprehensibility of the students' argumentative essays.

Key Words: writing essay; coherence; language acquisition