

INTEGRATING STRUCTURED WRITING WORKSHOPS WITH METACOGNITIVE INSTRUCTION TO ENHANCE VIETNAMESE SECONDARY STUDENTS' ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: August 2026 Revised: August 2026 Accepted: September 2026 Published: October 2026	<i>Argumentative writing requires learners to coordinate reasoning, evidence, organization, audience awareness, language use, and revision, yet secondary-school EFL students often receive limited support for regulating these interconnected processes. This qualitative study investigated how integrating structured writing workshops with metacognitive instruction influenced students' argumentative-writing performance and their awareness and regulation of writing. Four EFL teachers and 13 secondary-school learners participated in the study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations and analyzed thematically using deductive and inductive coding. The findings indicated perceived improvements in the organization of arguments, thesis alignment, use of supporting evidence, consideration of counterarguments, and revision of higher-order textual features. Structured workshop stages, including planning, drafting, peer response, revision, and editing, provided external scaffolding that made argumentative writing more manageable. Metacognitive prompts and tools supported learners in identifying goals, considering audience, monitoring claim–evidence relationships, recognizing weaknesses, and evaluating revision priorities. However, the development was uneven. Planning improved more consistently than monitoring and independent self-evaluation, while less-proficient learners continued to depend on teacher guidance, peer support, and checklists. Peer feedback also varied in quality, indicating the need for sustained feedback-literacy instruction. The study concludes that combining workshop-based scaffolding with explicit metacognitive regulation offers a promising framework for developing argumentative writing in secondary EFL settings.</i>
Keywords <i>Argumentative writing; Writing skills; Metacognitive instruction; Structured writing workshops; Writing self-regulation;</i>	
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INTRODUCTION

Argumentative writing is an essential academic competency because it requires students to formulate a defensible position, organize ideas logically, evaluate information, integrate

relevant evidence, consider alternative perspectives, and communicate conclusions persuasively. These abilities extend beyond language learning and contribute to critical thinking, disciplinary literacy, and informed participation in academic and social life. Nevertheless, writing an effective argumentative text is cognitively demanding, particularly for secondary-school students who are still developing linguistic proficiency, genre knowledge, reasoning skills, and control over the writing process (Teng & Yue, 2022; Yu-min & Xie, 2022). Students must simultaneously manage content generation, audience awareness, text organization, vocabulary, grammar, evidence selection, and revision. When writing instruction concentrates mainly on the final product, grammatical accuracy, or the reproduction of model texts, learners may produce formally acceptable compositions without fully understanding how arguments are developed, evaluated, and improved (Almashour & Davies, 2023; Azizah & Soraya, 2023; Djatmika et al., 2022). Consequently, many students experience difficulties in stating a precise thesis, connecting reasons to evidence, addressing counterarguments, maintaining coherence, and revising their work beyond surface-level corrections.

These challenges are especially relevant in Vietnamese secondary schools, where English writing is often taught within examination-oriented environments and limited instructional time. Although educational reform increasingly emphasizes learner competence, communication, critical thinking, and active participation, classroom writing practices may continue to prioritize language correctness and predetermined textual patterns. Such instruction can help students recognize basic structures, but it may not provide sufficient opportunities to explore ideas, test claims, receive formative feedback, or reflect on the strategies used during composition. Vietnamese learners may therefore know what an argumentative text should look like while remaining uncertain about how to plan, monitor, and revise one independently. Research on discourse awareness in Vietnam indicates that explicit attention to genre, organization, and reflective learning can promote writing development and learner autonomy (Dung & Ket, 2023). However, a pedagogical approach is needed that combines explicit procedural guidance with systematic support for students' internal regulation of writing.

A structured writing workshop offers one possible response to this need. Grounded in process-oriented writing pedagogy, the workshop treats writing as a recursive sequence of interconnected activities rather than a single act of producing and submitting a text. Students proceed through topic exploration, claim identification, evidence collection, argument organization, drafting, peer response, revision, editing, and final presentation. At each stage, teachers can provide focused mini-lessons, model texts, guided questions, graphic organizers, collaborative tasks, and formative feedback. Process-oriented perspectives emphasize that prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing should interact dynamically, enabling writers to return to earlier decisions when new ideas or problems emerge (Jackson & Weaver, 2023; Liu, 2024; Tuyen, 2024). Within argumentative writing, these procedures can help students clarify a thesis, sequence reasons, connect evidence to claims, anticipate opposing positions, and develop rebuttals (Li et al., 2023; Tuyen, 2024). Repeated drafting and targeted feedback may also improve coherence, persuasiveness, language accuracy, and confidence (Scott, 2020; Tuyen, 2024).

The effectiveness of a workshop, however, depends on more than dividing instruction into stages. Students must understand the purpose of each stage and learn how to make decisions within it. Peer review, for example, may become superficial when students focus only on spelling and grammar or lack criteria for evaluating logic and evidence. Similarly, graphic organizers may function as mechanical templates unless learners understand why claims, evidence, warrants, counterarguments, and rebuttals must be connected. Studies of peer and formative feedback emphasize that revision improves when learners develop

feedback literacy—the capacity to interpret comments, evaluate their relevance, and transform them into purposeful textual changes (Kamil, 2024; Liu, 2024; Marrugo & Anson, 2024; McCook, 2023). Workshop instruction therefore provides important external scaffolding, but students also need internal strategies that enable them to control and evaluate their own writing.

Metacognition supplies this internal dimension. In writing, metacognition refers to writers' awareness of their knowledge, strategies, difficulties, and decisions, together with their capacity to regulate these elements throughout task completion. It is commonly represented through planning, monitoring, and evaluating. During planning, students clarify the purpose and audience, establish a position, generate reasons, select evidence, anticipate counterarguments, and organize the text (Teng & Yue, 2022; Yu-min & Xie, 2022). During drafting, they monitor whether ideas remain relevant, whether evidence supports the claims, whether paragraphs follow a logical sequence, and whether the developing text is consistent with the thesis. During evaluation, they assess the completed draft against explicit criteria, identify weaknesses, prioritize revisions, and reflect on which strategies were effective. Metacognitive activities may include think-aloud modeling, planning prompts, self-questioning, monitoring checklists, reflective journals, rubrics, and structured self- or peer assessment. Research across second-language and writing contexts associates such strategies with stronger planning, improved self-regulation, more purposeful revision, greater autonomy, and increased writing confidence (Huang & Zhang, 2022; Oktoma et al., 2020; Rizqiyyah et al., 2021).

Structured workshops and metacognition are theoretically complementary. The workshop provides an observable sequence, instructional modeling, guided practice, interaction, and feedback, whereas metacognition enables learners to understand, manage, and transfer the strategies embedded in that sequence. Their integration can align metacognitive planning with topic exploration and argument mapping, monitoring with drafting and peer response, and evaluation with revision and editing. For instance, students may use a claim–evidence–rebuttal organizer before drafting, apply self-questioning prompts while composing, compare their drafts with genre-specific criteria, and record revision decisions after receiving feedback. In this arrangement, scaffolding does not merely lead students through a prescribed procedure; it gradually equips them to assume responsibility for that procedure. This combination may address both textual deficiencies—such as weak organization and unsupported claims—and regulatory difficulties, including poor time management, limited strategy use, and dependence on teacher correction.

Existing studies provide evidence for process-based workshops, peer feedback, self-regulated learning, and metacognitive writing instruction as separate or partially connected practices (Corbett, 2023; Li et al., 2023; Liu, 2024; Oanh, 2024; Scott, 2020; Tuyen, 2024). Research also suggests that metacognitive strategies can enhance learners' awareness, self-efficacy, and revision behavior (Huang & Zhang, 2022; Negretti et al., 2023; Teng & Yue, 2022). However, the available literature gives limited attention to a deliberately integrated model in which every stage of a structured argumentative-writing workshop is paired with an explicit metacognitive function. Evidence is particularly limited at the Vietnamese secondary-school level, as much of the relevant research has been conducted in higher education, general second-language contexts, writing groups, or technology-supported environments. Findings from those settings cannot automatically be transferred to secondary classrooms, where students differ in cognitive maturity, English proficiency, assessment pressure, class size, and prior experience with peer or self-assessment.

The novelty of the present study therefore lies in designing and examining an integrated instructional framework that connects the external scaffolds of a structured writing workshop with the internal regulation fostered through metacognitive instruction in Vietnamese

secondary schools. Rather than treating planning, monitoring, and evaluation as supplementary reflection activities, the study embeds them directly into topic exploration, argument mapping, drafting, peer review, revision, and editing. This stage-to-strategy alignment is expected to clarify not only whether students' argumentative texts improve, but also how learners become more conscious and independent writers. The study further extends previous research by examining argumentative-writing performance alongside students' metacognitive awareness, thereby addressing both the quality of the written product and the regulatory processes that support its production.

Accordingly, the study aims to investigate the efficacy of integrating a structured writing workshop with metacognitive instruction for teaching argumentative texts in Vietnamese secondary schools. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether the integrated approach improves students' argumentative-writing performance and strengthens their metacognitive awareness of planning, monitoring, and evaluating their writing. To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following research questions: *To what extent does the integration of a structured writing workshop and metacognitive instruction improve Vietnamese secondary-school students' argumentative-writing performance? And How does participation in the integrated instructional approach influence students' metacognitive awareness and regulation of argumentative writing?*

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore how structured writing workshops integrated with metacognitive instruction were implemented and experienced in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) academic writing classes at secondary schools in Thailand. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of participants' perceptions, classroom experiences, instructional practices, and responses to the integrated writing approach. Rather than measuring writing improvement exclusively through numerical scores, the study focused on how teachers organized the writing workshops, how metacognitive strategies were incorporated into classroom activities, and how learners perceived the contribution of these strategies to their argumentative writing processes.

The qualitative design was appropriate for addressing the research objectives because the study investigated processes that were contextual, interactive, and difficult to capture through standardized measurements alone. The integration of structured writing workshops and metacognitive instruction involved several classroom practices, including planning an argument, monitoring the development of ideas, evaluating drafts, responding to feedback, and revising written texts. Understanding these practices required attention to participants' explanations, classroom interactions, behaviors, and reflections. Interviews enabled the researchers to examine how teachers and learners interpreted the instructional approach, whereas classroom observations provided direct evidence of how the approach was enacted in actual writing lessons. The combination of these methods therefore supported a detailed examination of both reported experiences and observable instructional practices.

The design was also suitable for investigating the relationship between external instructional scaffolding and learners' internal regulation of writing. Structured writing workshops provided visible stages such as topic exploration, argument planning, drafting, peer review, revision, and editing. Metacognitive instruction, by contrast, involved less directly observable processes, including learners' awareness of their writing goals, strategy selection, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Through interviews and observations, the study examined how these two dimensions interacted in classroom practice. Teachers' accounts clarified the pedagogical rationale behind particular activities, while learners'

accounts revealed how they understood and used the metacognitive strategies introduced during the workshops.

Research Participants

The participants consisted of four EFL teachers and 13 EFL learners who were involved in academic writing classes at secondary schools in Thailand. The total sample therefore included 17 participants. The two participant groups were selected because they could provide complementary perspectives on the implementation and perceived effectiveness of structured writing workshops integrated with metacognitive instruction. The teachers contributed information about instructional planning, classroom implementation, learner engagement, feedback practices, and pedagogical challenges, while the learners provided accounts of their writing experiences, strategy use, difficulties, and perceptions of the integrated approach.

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. This sampling strategy was appropriate because the study required individuals who had direct experience with EFL academic writing instruction and participation in argumentative writing activities. The teacher participants were required to meet the following criteria: they were currently teaching English at the secondary-school level in Thailand; they had experience teaching academic or argumentative writing; they had participated in or implemented writing lessons that included structured stages such as planning, drafting, feedback, revision, and editing; and they were willing to be interviewed and observed during classroom instruction.

The four teacher participants represented secondary-school EFL teaching contexts in Thailand. Relevant demographic information collected from them included age range, gender, highest academic qualification, teaching experience, experience teaching academic writing, school context, and previous professional development related to writing pedagogy or metacognitive instruction. These characteristics were collected to support a contextual interpretation of the findings. However, identifying details such as personal names and school names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect confidentiality.

Instruments and Data Collection

Two primary instruments were used to collect the qualitative data: semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The use of both instruments enabled methodological triangulation by comparing what participants reported with what occurred during classroom instruction.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interview guides were developed separately for the teacher and learner participants. The interview questions were derived from the research objectives and relevant concepts associated with process-oriented writing instruction, structured writing workshops, and metacognition. Particular attention was given to the metacognitive processes of planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The teacher interview guide included questions about the organization of the writing workshop, the instructional activities used at each stage, the integration of metacognitive prompts, learner participation, feedback and revision practices, perceived changes in students' argumentative writing, and challenges associated with implementation. Teachers were also invited to explain how they supported students in formulating claims, selecting evidence, addressing counterarguments, monitoring draft quality, and evaluating completed texts.

The learner interview guide focused on students' experiences of planning, drafting, peer review, revision, and self-evaluation. Questions examined how learners identified their writing goals, organized claims and evidence, monitored the coherence of their drafts, responded to teacher or peer feedback, and evaluated their final texts. Learners were also asked to discuss which workshop activities they found useful, which tasks they found difficult, and whether the approach influenced their confidence, independence, or awareness of writing

strategies. The semi-structured format provided consistency across participants while allowing the interviewer to ask follow-up questions, request examples, and clarify unexpected responses. The interviews were conducted in a language that allowed participants to express their ideas clearly. When interviews were conducted in Thai, the transcripts were translated into English for analysis and reporting. To preserve meaning, translated excerpts were checked against the original recordings and transcripts.

Classroom Observation

A semi-structured observation protocol was developed to document the implementation of structured writing workshops and metacognitive instruction in the participating classes. The observation protocol was aligned with the main stages of argumentative writing and the three metacognitive processes examined in the study. The protocol included indicators related to topic exploration, thesis development, evidence selection, argument organization, drafting, peer feedback, revision, and editing. It also included metacognitive indicators, such as whether learners were asked to establish writing goals, explain their writing plans, monitor the relationship between claims and evidence, identify problems in their drafts, use self-assessment criteria, and reflect on revision decisions. In addition to these predetermined indicators, the observer recorded descriptive field notes concerning teacher explanations, instructional scaffolding, student questions, peer interactions, feedback exchanges, strategy use, learner engagement, and difficulties arising during writing activities. Reflective notes were recorded separately to distinguish direct classroom observations from the researcher's preliminary interpretations.

The observation protocol was developed from the study objectives and conceptual framework. It was reviewed by specialists in EFL writing pedagogy and qualitative research to determine whether the indicators adequately represented structured workshop practices and metacognitive strategy use. A pilot observation was conducted in a comparable academic writing class. The pilot helped refine unclear indicators, reduce overlap among observation categories, and improve the organization of the field-note format. To improve observational consistency, operational definitions were prepared for the principal indicators. For example, planning was defined as observable activities involving goal setting, audience consideration, position selection, idea generation, or organization before drafting. Monitoring referred to activities in which learners checked or adjusted the relevance, coherence, evidence, or organization of their developing texts. Evaluating referred to judgments made about draft quality, strategy effectiveness, or revision priorities after or between drafting stages.

Data Analysis

The interview transcripts and classroom observation notes were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method was appropriate because the study aimed to identify recurring patterns in participants' experiences and classroom practices while retaining the contextual detail of the qualitative data. The analysis combined deductive and inductive coding. Deductive codes were developed from the research objectives and conceptual framework. These codes included structured workshop stages, instructional scaffolding, planning, monitoring, evaluating, feedback, peer interaction, revision, argument organization, evidence use, learner autonomy, confidence, and implementation challenges. Inductive coding was also used to identify unanticipated ideas emerging from the data, such as difficulties associated with time constraints, learner proficiency, feedback quality, classroom participation, or dependence on teacher correction.

The analysis followed several stages. First, the researchers became familiar with the data by repeatedly reading the interview transcripts and observation notes. Initial comments were recorded to identify potentially significant statements, behaviors, and classroom episodes. Second, meaningful segments of data were assigned preliminary codes. The coding

process focused on participants' explanations of how the integrated approach was implemented, how they experienced it, and what outcomes or difficulties they associated with it. Third, related codes were grouped into preliminary categories. For example, codes concerning outlining, goal setting, audience awareness, and evidence mapping were organized under metacognitive planning. Codes related to checking coherence, assessing evidence, detecting inconsistencies, and modifying ideas during drafting were categorized as monitoring. Self-assessment, rubric use, reflection, feedback interpretation, and revision prioritization were grouped under evaluating and reflective revision.

Fourth, the categories were compared across participant groups and data sources. Teacher accounts were compared with learner accounts to identify shared and contrasting perceptions. Interview statements were also compared with classroom observations to determine whether reported instructional practices were evident during lessons. Convergence strengthened the credibility of an interpretation, whereas divergence was retained and examined rather than removed. Contradictory cases were analyzed to provide a more balanced understanding of the integrated approach. Fifth, the categories were reviewed and developed into broader themes aligned with the research questions. For the question concerning the perceived efficacy of the integrated approach, the analysis examined themes related to argumentative organization, claim and evidence development, engagement with counterarguments, revision quality, writing confidence, and learner independence. For the question concerning metacognitive awareness and regulation, the analysis focused on planning behaviors, monitoring during drafting, self-evaluation, feedback use, reflective revision, and strategy transfer.

Themes were retained only when they were supported by sufficient evidence and contributed directly to an understanding of the research objectives. Each theme was defined clearly and distinguished from related themes to minimize conceptual overlap. Representative quotations from teacher and learner interviews and relevant observation excerpts were selected to illustrate the findings. Pseudonyms or participant codes were used when reporting quotations. Several strategies were employed to strengthen the trustworthiness of the analysis. Data-source triangulation was achieved by comparing teacher interviews, learner interviews, and classroom observations. Member checking was used to confirm selected interpretations with participants. Peer debriefing enabled members of the research team to examine coding decisions and challenge unsupported interpretations. An audit trail documented the development of codes, categories, themes, and revisions made during the analytical process.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The qualitative findings were organized according to the two research questions. Data from interviews with four EFL teachers and 13 EFL learners were considered alongside classroom observations. Six guiding questions were used to explore participants' perceptions and experiences. The first three questions addressed changes in argumentative-writing performance, whereas the remaining questions examined metacognitive awareness and regulation. Participants were identified using the codes T1–T4 for teachers and L1–L13 for learners.

To what extent does the integration of a structured writing workshop and metacognitive instruction improve Vietnamese secondary-school students' argumentative-writing performance?

The findings indicated that the integrated instructional approach contributed to perceived improvements in four interrelated dimensions of argumentative writing: organization, thesis development, use of evidence, and revision quality. Teachers and learners did not describe improvement as an immediate or uniform outcome. Instead, they viewed it as

a gradual development resulting from repeated planning, drafting, feedback, self-checking, and revision. Learners who initially depended heavily on model texts and teacher correction reportedly became more capable of constructing and reviewing their own arguments. Nevertheless, differences in language proficiency, participation, and prior writing experience affected the degree of improvement.

Table 1
Teachers' and Learners' Responses Concerning Argumentative-Writing Performance

Interview question	Summary of EFL teachers' responses	Summary of EFL learners' responses	Supporting observational indicators
How did the integrated approach influence the organization and coherence of students' argumentative texts?	Teachers observed that students became more capable of organizing introductions, thesis statements, supporting paragraphs, counterarguments, and conclusions.	Learners reported that outlines, claim–evidence maps, and paragraph checklists helped them determine what to write and where to place each idea. Some learners still had difficulty producing effective transitions.	Students were observed using planning sheets, rearranging ideas before drafting, checking paragraph functions, and discussing whether each paragraph supported the thesis.
How did the approach affect students' development of claims, evidence, counterarguments, and rebuttals?	Teachers perceived improvement in students' ability to support claims and recognize opposing perspectives. However, the quality of evidence varied, and some learners continued to rely on personal opinion.	Learners became more aware that an argumentative text required evidence rather than unsupported statements. Counterargument activities helped them consider alternative positions.	During planning and peer review, students asked whether evidence was relevant, identified unsupported claims, and suggested counterarguments.
How did feedback, self-evaluation, and repeated revision affect the quality of students' final texts?	Teachers reported that revision became more substantive. Students increasingly revised ideas, evidence, and organization instead of correcting only grammar and spelling.	Learners stated that peer comments, teacher feedback, and self-assessment rubrics helped them identify weaknesses that they had not noticed in their first drafts.	Successive drafts showed additions of evidence, clearer thesis statements, reordered paragraphs, expanded rebuttals, and correction of language problems.

Organization and Coherence of Argumentative Texts

Responses to the first interview question suggested that the structured workshop made the organization of argumentative writing more visible and manageable. Before the intervention, teachers described many students' compositions as collections of ideas rather than logically sequenced arguments. Learners often began writing immediately after receiving a topic, without identifying their position, intended audience, or supporting reasons. The workshop changed this pattern by requiring students to complete a planning stage before drafting.

Teachers emphasized the value of graphic organizers and teacher modeling. These tools enabled learners to distinguish the functions of the thesis statement, supporting claims, evidence, counterargument, rebuttal, and conclusion. Teacher T1 explained: "Previously, many students wrote whatever idea came first. After using the workshop stages, they began to ask whether each paragraph had a clear function and whether it was connected to the thesis." (T1) Teacher T3 similarly observed: "The outlines did not automatically make every essay

good, but they reduced repetition and irrelevant ideas. Students had a clearer direction before they started writing complete paragraphs.” (T3) Learners confirmed that the planning tools helped them control the sequence of their ideas. Learner L4 stated: “The claim-and-evidence chart helped me see that one reason should be explained in one paragraph. Before this class, I sometimes put three different reasons together.” (L4) Learner L9 added: “I could check my essay section by section. I knew that after giving my opinion, I needed reasons, evidence, an opposite view, and a conclusion.” (L9)

Classroom observations were consistent with these accounts. During the initial lessons, several learners attempted to draft without completing their organizers. In later sessions, most students referred to their plans while writing and revised the order of their points before developing full paragraphs. Peer discussions also increasingly addressed paragraph functions and thesis alignment. These behaviors indicated greater awareness of global text organization.

The improvement was not identical for all learners. Students with lower English proficiency occasionally produced well-organized plans but struggled to express the planned relationships in accurate and cohesive language. Transitions between ideas also remained problematic in several drafts. The integrated approach therefore appeared to improve conceptual organization more consistently than linguistic cohesion. Nevertheless, the participants generally perceived that the staged process helped students produce texts with clearer argumentative direction and fewer unrelated ideas.

Development of Claims, Evidence, Counterarguments, and Rebuttals

The second interview question examined whether the integrated approach strengthened the substantive quality of students’ arguments. Teachers reported that learners gradually moved from expressing personal opinions toward supporting their positions with reasons and evidence. Explicit modeling of claim–evidence relationships was particularly important because many students initially treated a reason, example, and piece of evidence as interchangeable.

Teacher T2 commented: “At first, students believed that giving an example was always enough. Through the workshop, they learned to ask whether the example really proved the claim and whether another reader would find it convincing.” (T2) Teacher T4 noted progress in students’ treatment of alternative positions: “Counterarguments were new for several students. After repeated practice, they understood that mentioning another opinion did not weaken their essay; it could make their own position more credible.” (T4) Learners also described a change in how they evaluated support for their arguments. Learner L2 explained: “I used to write ‘I think’ many times and then give my opinion. Now I try to find a fact, an example, or an explanation that connects with my reason.” (L2) Learner L11 reflected on the difficulty of writing rebuttals: “Writing the opposite view was possible after the teacher gave examples, but answering it was more difficult. I had to think why the other view was not strong enough.” (L11)

Observational data showed that students began to question the relevance and sufficiency of evidence during peer-review sessions. Comments such as “This is only your opinion,” “How does this example support your claim?” and “What would someone on the other side say?” occurred increasingly in later lessons. Several students added counterarguments and rebuttals after these discussions. Despite these developments, the participants acknowledged continuing limitations. Some learners selected evidence that was only loosely related to their claims, while others relied on generalized statements because they lacked access to suitable sources or sufficient background knowledge. Rebuttals sometimes merely repeated the original claim rather than critically responding to the opposing position. Thus, the integrated approach improved awareness of argumentative components, but the sophistication of evidence evaluation and rebuttal construction remained dependent on learners’ language proficiency, knowledge of the topic, and reasoning ability.

Effects of Feedback, Self-Evaluation, and Revision

The third interview question focused on the role of revision. Both participant groups indicated that the integrated approach changed students' understanding of revision from surface correction to reconsideration of meaning and argument quality. Teachers reported that, before the workshop, students generally viewed the first completed draft as nearly final. Revision often consisted of correcting vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation after receiving teacher comments.

Teacher T1 described the change as follows: "The strongest improvement was not that students made fewer mistakes in the first draft. It was that they became willing to change the content and structure after receiving feedback." (T1) Teacher T3 added: "Some students deleted weak reasons, added evidence, or moved paragraphs. These are more meaningful revisions than simply changing individual words." (T3) Learners indicated that feedback from different sources served different functions. Learner L6 stated: "My friend noticed that my second reason did not support the thesis. I did not see that problem because I was concentrating on grammar." (L6) Learner L13 explained the usefulness of self-evaluation: "The rubric made me read my own essay as if I were the teacher. I checked the thesis, evidence, and counterargument before checking grammar." (L13)

Classroom observations supported the perception that revision became more extensive. Comparison of successive drafts showed that students reformulated thesis statements, changed the sequence of reasons, inserted explanations after evidence, added opposing views, and expanded conclusions. Revision checklists appeared to redirect students' attention toward higher-order concerns before language editing. However, peer feedback quality varied considerably. Some students provided detailed suggestions, while others gave broad comments such as "good essay" or focused almost entirely on grammar. Several learners also expressed uncertainty about accepting feedback that conflicted with their original intentions. Teachers addressed this issue by modeling constructive feedback, requiring reviewers to justify suggestions, and reminding writers that they retained responsibility for final decisions. Overall, repeated feedback and self-evaluation appeared to strengthen revision practices, although sustained training in feedback literacy was necessary.

How does participation in the integrated instructional approach influence students' metacognitive awareness and regulation of argumentative writing?

The findings related to the second research question suggested that participation in the integrated approach increased learners' awareness of writing as a controllable process. The strongest changes were reported in planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation. Learners became more likely to identify goals, consider an audience, check thesis alignment, recognize writing problems, and evaluate their drafts using explicit criteria. However, the transition from supported strategy use to independent regulation remained incomplete for some participants.

Table 2

Teachers' and Learners' Responses Concerning Metacognitive Awareness and Regulation

Interview question	Summary of EFL teachers' responses	Summary of EFL learners' responses	Supporting observational indicators
How did the integrated approach influence students' planning before writing?	Teachers observed that learners spent more time defining their position, audience, reasons, evidence, and anticipated counterarguments. Planning became more purposeful, although some students still	Learners reported that planning reduced confusion and helped them begin writing. They became more aware of setting goals and selecting information before	Students completed goal-setting prompts, argument maps, audience questions, and evidence-selection tasks before producing full drafts.

Interview question	Summary of EFL teachers' responses	Summary of EFL learners' responses	Supporting observational indicators
	regarded it as an additional task.	drafting.	
5. How did participation affect students' ability to monitor and adjust their writing while drafting?	Teachers reported that students increasingly checked whether ideas were relevant, adequately supported, and logically connected. More proficient learners internalized the monitoring prompts more quickly than less proficient learners.	Learners described pausing during drafting to reread the thesis, compare paragraphs with the outline, and identify missing explanations or evidence.	Learners were observed using monitoring checklists, rereading earlier paragraphs, discussing problems with peers, and modifying plans during drafting.
6. How did the approach influence students' self-evaluation, reflection, and independent regulation of writing?	Teachers perceived growing learner independence, particularly when students used rubrics and reflective journals to identify strengths, difficulties, and revision priorities. Some students continued to depend heavily on teacher confirmation.	Learners reported greater awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and greater confidence in evaluating their work. They also recognized that knowing a strategy did not always mean using it consistently.	Students completed self-assessments, justified revision choices, recorded strategy reflections, and compared their final texts with initial goals.

Development of Metacognitive Planning

The fourth interview question explored changes in students' planning. Teachers reported that learners became more deliberate in defining the purpose of an essay and preparing its content. Rather than immediately composing an introduction, students were encouraged to identify their position, intended audience, main reasons, supporting evidence, and possible counterarguments.

Teacher T2 observed: "The students began to understand that planning was not only making a list of ideas. They had to decide which ideas were useful, how they were related, and what response they expected from the reader." (T2) Teacher T4 explained that planning improved students' readiness to write: "When they completed the audience and purpose questions, their thesis statements became more focused. They were less likely to change position in the middle of the essay." (T4) Learners generally viewed planning as helpful, especially when facing an unfamiliar topic. Learner L1 stated: "Before, I waited for a good first sentence and sometimes could not begin. With the plan, I started from my opinion and reasons, so writing the introduction was easier." (L1) Learner L8 added: "Thinking about the reader helped me choose explanations. I could not assume that the reader already agreed with me." (L8)

Observation notes showed that planning became increasingly interactive. Students compared potential claims, evaluated whether examples were sufficiently relevant, and revised thesis statements before drafting. The planning sheets therefore functioned not only as organizational devices but also as prompts for metacognitive decision-making. Nevertheless, some learners initially considered planning unnecessary or time-consuming. They completed organizers quickly to satisfy the teacher and then departed from them during drafting. Teachers addressed this tendency by explicitly demonstrating how a stronger plan reduced later revision problems. Over time, most learners appeared to recognize that planning could reduce uncertainty and improve control over the writing task.

Monitoring and Adjustment During Drafting

The fifth interview question concerned students' ability to monitor writing as it developed. Teacher responses suggested that monitoring was more difficult to teach than planning because it required students to divide their attention between generating language and evaluating its quality. Despite this challenge, teachers noticed that learners increasingly paused to reread, compare their drafts with their plans, and identify missing connections.

Teacher T1 commented: "The monitoring prompts encouraged students to stop and ask whether the paragraph was still supporting the main argument. Previously, many of them only checked after finishing the whole essay." (T1) Teacher T3 highlighted differences among proficiency levels: "Stronger students began using the questions without being reminded. Less proficient students still needed the checklist because language production occupied most of their attention." (T3) Learners described specific monitoring actions. Learner L5 explained: "After each paragraph, I looked again at my thesis. Sometimes I found that I had written an interesting idea, but it was not connected to my position." (L5) Learner L10 stated: "The question 'Have I explained why this evidence matters?' was useful. I often included an example but forgot to explain the connection." (L10)

Observations revealed that students used several forms of monitoring. Some reread individual sentences, while others checked paragraph-level organization or asked peers to evaluate a developing argument. Learners occasionally changed their original plans when they discovered that a reason was weak or that two points overlapped. This willingness to adjust the plan demonstrated that metacognitive regulation was becoming recursive rather than rigid. Monitoring remained inconsistent, however. Several students completed checklists mechanically without making corresponding changes. Others concentrated so heavily on language accuracy that they overlooked weaknesses in reasoning. Teacher prompting and peer discussion remained important, suggesting that not all learners had fully internalized the monitoring strategies by the end of the instructional period.

Self-Evaluation, Reflection, and Independent Regulation

The final interview question examined whether the integrated approach encouraged learners to evaluate their writing independently. Teachers reported that rubrics, reflective journals, and post-writing discussions helped learners articulate both the strengths and limitations of their texts. Students became more capable of identifying specific revision priorities rather than waiting for the teacher to mark every problem.

Teacher T2 stated: "The reflection showed me that students were beginning to name their own writing problems. They could say, for example, that the evidence was relevant but not sufficiently explained." (T2) Teacher T4 nevertheless cautioned that independence was still developing: "Some students could identify a weakness but still asked me to decide exactly how to correct it. Awareness improved faster than complete independence." (T4) Learner L3 reported greater confidence in self-assessment: "I can now check more than grammar. I look at whether the thesis is clear, whether every reason has evidence, and whether I answered the opposite opinion." (L3) Learner L12 reflected on the gradual nature of strategy development: "I know the steps now, but sometimes when the topic is difficult, I forget to use all of them. The checklist reminds me what to do." (L12)

Observation data showed that students increasingly referred to assessment criteria while reviewing drafts and could explain why they accepted or rejected particular feedback. Several reflective entries also demonstrated strategy awareness, including statements about the usefulness of outlining, rereading, seeking clarification, and delaying grammatical editing until the argument was established. The findings therefore suggest that the integrated approach enhanced metacognitive awareness more clearly than it produced complete self-regulation. Learners acquired a vocabulary for discussing their writing processes and became better able to identify appropriate strategies. However, consistent and independent application

remained influenced by proficiency, task difficulty, motivation, and access to teacher support. Continued practice would be required for the externally provided prompts to become internalized habits.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the combination of a structured writing workshop and metacognitive instruction improved argumentative writing primarily by making both the textual structure and the thinking process explicit. The structured workshop provided external scaffolding through sequenced stages, modeling, organizers, peer interaction, feedback, and revision. Metacognitive instruction encouraged learners to use this structure purposefully by setting goals, monitoring progress, detecting problems, and evaluating outcomes. The perceived improvements were most evident in organization, thesis alignment, awareness of evidence requirements, and willingness to revise higher-order aspects of writing. Counterargument and rebuttal construction also developed, although these remained demanding for many learners. The approach did not eliminate linguistic difficulties or guarantee sophisticated argumentation, but it gave learners procedures through which these difficulties could be identified and addressed.

Participation also strengthened metacognitive awareness. Learners increasingly recognized that effective writing involved decisions before, during, and after drafting. Planning helped them clarify purpose and structure; monitoring enabled them to identify divergence from the thesis or weaknesses in evidence; and evaluation supported more deliberate revision. Teachers' and learners' accounts were broadly supported by observations of planning-tool use, peer-review discussions, checklist-guided monitoring, and changes across drafts. The qualitative evidence therefore suggests that the integrated approach was effective not simply because students followed a series of workshop activities, but because those activities were paired with reflection on why, when, and how particular writing strategies should be used. At the same time, improvement differed among learners, and some remained dependent on prompts and teacher guidance. The findings should consequently be interpreted as evidence of meaningful but developing changes in argumentative-writing performance and metacognitive regulation rather than as proof of uniform mastery.

Discussion

The findings indicate that integrating structured writing workshops with metacognitive instruction supported the development of students' argumentative writing by making both the structure of argumentation and the cognitive processes underlying writing more explicit. Teachers and learners perceived improvements in thesis formulation, organization, evidence use, consideration of counterarguments, and revision quality. These improvements were not described as immediate or identical across participants; rather, they developed through repeated engagement in planning, drafting, peer response, self-monitoring, evaluation, and revision. This pattern supports process-oriented perspectives that conceptualize writing as a recursive activity in which writers continually reconsider content, organization, audience, and language rather than producing a text through a single linear attempt (Jackson & Weaver, 2023; Liu, 2024; Tuyen, 2024). The findings therefore confirm that structured stages can reduce the cognitive burden of argumentative writing by dividing a complex task into manageable actions. At the same time, they extend previous workshop research by suggesting that procedural stages become more pedagogically productive when learners are explicitly taught to understand why each stage is necessary and how to regulate their decisions within it.

One of the clearest findings concerned improvements in the organization and coherence of students' argumentative texts. Teachers observed that students became more capable of organizing introductions, thesis statements, supporting paragraphs, counterarguments, rebuttals, and conclusions. Learners similarly reported that argument maps, outlines, and paragraph checklists helped them decide what information to include and where it should be placed. These findings are consistent with Tuyen (2024), who reported that writing workshops

can improve students' organization, clarity, and overall writing development through guided practice and iterative composition. They also align with Hanušová et al. (2020), whose process-genre intervention demonstrated the value of combining explicit genre knowledge with process-based writing activities. The present findings add contextual depth to these studies by showing how organizational improvement may occur: students did not merely reproduce a prescribed essay structure but increasingly used the thesis as a reference point for evaluating paragraph relevance and sequencing. This suggests that the workshop helped transform genre structure from a fixed template into a decision-making framework.

Nevertheless, the data also showed that conceptual organization improved more consistently than linguistic cohesion. Some learners produced logically ordered plans but continued to struggle with transitions, sentence construction, and accurate expression of relationships among claims. This limitation is important because it prevents the findings from being interpreted as evidence that structural scaffolding automatically resolves all writing difficulties. Yu-min and Xie (2022) similarly observed that novice EFL writers may display uneven discourse competence, with difficulties occurring across both global organization and local linguistic realization. Almashour and Davies (2023) also emphasized that argumentative-writing strategies interact with learners' proficiency levels. The current study therefore confirms that metacognitive and workshop-based scaffolds may improve strategic control before they produce fully developed linguistic performance. For less-proficient learners, additional instruction in cohesion, academic vocabulary, syntactic control, and explicit signaling of argumentative relationships remains necessary.

A second major finding involved students' development of claims, evidence, counterarguments, and rebuttals. Teachers reported that learners gradually moved away from unsupported opinion and became more aware that argumentative claims needed relevant reasons, examples, and evidence. Students also began to recognize that acknowledging an opposing position could strengthen rather than weaken an argument. This finding supports Jimola and Olaniyan's (2021) argument that argumentative writing contributes to dialectical reasoning by requiring students to consider and respond to competing perspectives. It is also compatible with Deane's (2020) emphasis on building and justifying interpretations through reasoned use of textual or evidentiary support. Furthermore, Olson et al. (2025) found that cognitive-strategy instruction can strengthen secondary students' text-based argument writing by making the processes of interpretation, evidence selection, and justification visible. The current study extends this line of research by indicating that secondary EFL learners may benefit when evidence evaluation is embedded in a workshop sequence and reinforced through metacognitive questions such as whether a source actually supports a claim and whether a reader would consider it convincing.

However, rebuttal construction remained difficult. Some learners could identify an opposing view but responded by repeating their initial claim rather than critically evaluating the alternative position. Others relied on generalized evidence or personal experience because of limited topic knowledge or restricted access to credible sources. These findings qualify the otherwise positive interpretation of the integrated approach. The ability to include the formal components of argumentation does not necessarily indicate sophisticated reasoning. Munroe (2023) warns that evidence and rational belief cannot be treated as straightforwardly equivalent, as apparently supportive evidence may be misleading or insufficient. Although Munroe's philosophical analysis differs from the classroom context of the present study, it reinforces the importance of teaching students to assess the quality, relevance, and limitations of evidence rather than simply inserting examples into predetermined positions. Consequently, structured workshops should include explicit instruction in source evaluation, warrants, evidentiary sufficiency, and the logical relationship between claims and rebuttals.

The findings concerning feedback and revision also confirmed previous research while revealing an important shift in learners' understanding of revision. Before participating in the integrated approach, students reportedly tended to view revision as correction of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation. Following repeated feedback and self-evaluation, they became more willing to reformulate thesis statements, replace weak reasons, add evidence, reorganize paragraphs, and expand rebuttals. This change is consistent with Liu's (2024) systematic review, which concluded that peer feedback can strengthen writing quality, learner engagement, and revision practices when students receive adequate guidance. It also supports Oanh's (2024) findings regarding the contribution of feedback to Vietnamese university students' writing development and Martínez and Gómez's (2023) conclusion that feedback combined with strategy training can improve undergraduate writing ability. The present study extends these findings to secondary EFL writing by suggesting that feedback is most effective when learners are given criteria for interpreting it and opportunities to convert comments into specific revision decisions.

The uneven quality of peer feedback, however, remained a challenge. Some learners offered detailed comments on argument logic and evidence, while others provided general praise or focused primarily on grammar. This variation confirms concerns raised by Weaver (2023) and Jackson and Weaver (2023), who argue that peer review can become ineffective when its purpose, roles, and evaluative criteria are insufficiently defined. It also aligns with Liu's (2024) conclusion that the benefits of peer feedback depend on students' feedback literacy and the quality of instructional support. The current findings therefore contradict any assumption that peer review is inherently beneficial merely because students exchange drafts. Productive peer review requires modeling, guided questions, practice in justifying comments, and opportunities for writers to decide which recommendations are appropriate. The teacher remains important not as the sole corrector but as a facilitator who helps students interpret feedback and maintain ownership of their texts.

The findings related to metacognitive planning showed that learners became more deliberate in clarifying purpose, audience, position, reasons, evidence, and anticipated counterarguments before drafting. This confirms Huang and Zhang's (2022) finding that a process-genre approach can facilitate L2 writers' use of metacognitive strategies in argumentative writing. It also supports Oktoma et al. (2020), who identified planning, monitoring, and evaluating as central strategies in argumentative-writing development. In the present study, planning appeared to reduce hesitation and help learners begin writing with clearer direction. More importantly, students gradually recognized that planning was not simply listing ideas but selecting and organizing information according to communicative goals. This represents an extension of prior work because it shows how external tools, such as argument maps and audience prompts, may function as transitional supports through which internal metacognitive habits are developed.

Monitoring during drafting proved more difficult than planning. Learners increasingly reread their theses, compared paragraphs with outlines, and checked whether evidence had been explained, yet less-proficient students continued to depend on prompts and checklists. This finding supports Teng and Yue's (2022) conclusion that metacognitive writing strategies are associated with writing performance and critical thinking, while also demonstrating that different metacognitive processes may not develop at the same rate. Monitoring places substantial demands on working attention because learners must generate language and simultaneously evaluate relevance, coherence, and evidentiary adequacy. Azizah and Soraya (2023) similarly showed that EFL writers draw on cognitive and metacognitive strategies in complex and variable ways throughout composition. The current study extends this understanding by indicating that monitoring may require more sustained scaffolding than

prewriting planning, particularly for learners whose linguistic difficulties consume much of their cognitive attention.

Self-evaluation and reflection also developed, but metacognitive awareness appeared to improve more rapidly than complete independence. Learners became more capable of identifying weak evidence, unclear theses, and missing counterarguments, yet some still expected teachers to determine exactly how problems should be corrected. This distinction is theoretically significant. Awareness of a problem does not automatically produce the strategic knowledge, confidence, or linguistic resources needed to solve it. Djatmika et al. (2022) linked metacognition with self-efficacy and academic-writing growth mindsets, while Kamil (2024) highlighted the relationship between learning activities and confidence in academic writing. Kharroubi and ElMediouni (2024) likewise argued that learner autonomy develops through self-directed and self-regulated processes rather than through the immediate removal of instructional support. The findings therefore suggest that metacognitive instruction should be understood as gradual internalization. Checklists, modeling, peer dialogue, and teacher prompts remain necessary until students can apply regulatory strategies consistently across tasks.

The combined findings also contribute to research on assessment as learning. Students used rubrics, peer comments, reflective journals, and self-assessment criteria not merely to receive judgments but to understand and direct subsequent learning. This is consistent with He and Lu (2024), who demonstrated that assessment-as-learning practices can support EFL writers' active participation in evaluation. The present study extends this principle by integrating assessment activities across the workshop rather than placing them only after a completed draft. Planning tools established criteria before writing, monitoring questions guided decisions during drafting, and rubrics supported evaluation after drafting. Assessment therefore became part of the writing process itself.

Taken together, the study's main contribution lies in demonstrating the perceived value of aligning external workshop stages with internal metacognitive functions. Previous studies have examined process writing, feedback, metacognition, self-regulation, or genre instruction separately or in partial combinations (Hanušová et al., 2020; Huang & Zhang, 2022; Liu, 2024; Tuyen, 2024). The current findings extend this literature by showing how planning can be integrated with topic exploration and argument mapping, monitoring with drafting and peer response, and evaluation with revision and editing. This stage-to-strategy alignment appears to help learners understand not only what they should do but also why and when they should do it.

The results must nevertheless be interpreted within the limitations of the qualitative design. The study examined perceptions and observed practices among four teachers and 13 learners; it did not use standardized pre- and post-tests to establish measurable causal effects. Claims of improvement therefore refer to participants' reported experiences and observed changes rather than statistically verified gains. In addition, differences in proficiency, task difficulty, participation, and teacher support shaped the extent to which learners benefited. The findings support the pedagogical promise of the integrated approach but do not establish that it will produce identical outcomes across all secondary-school contexts. Future research should combine qualitative evidence with writing assessments, longitudinal analysis of drafts, and comparison groups to examine the magnitude and durability of improvement.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that integrating structured writing workshops with metacognitive instruction provides a promising approach to supporting secondary-school EFL learners' argumentative-writing development. The structured workshop made the complex demands of argumentation more manageable by organizing instruction into interconnected stages of topic exploration, planning, drafting, peer response, revision, and editing. Within these stages,

metacognitive prompts encouraged learners to clarify goals, consider audience, evaluate evidence, monitor thesis alignment, identify weaknesses, and justify revision decisions. Teachers and learners perceived meaningful improvements in argumentative organization, thesis clarity, awareness of evidence, engagement with opposing positions, and willingness to revise higher-order aspects of texts. These improvements were supported by classroom observations showing increased use of planning tools, monitoring questions, assessment criteria, peer discussion, and substantive revision. The findings therefore suggest that writing performance develops more effectively when students receive both external procedural scaffolding and opportunities to regulate their own thinking.

The study also concludes that metacognitive development is gradual and uneven. Learners became more capable of discussing their writing strategies and identifying problems, but several continued to rely on checklists, peers, or teacher confirmation. Planning appeared to develop more readily than monitoring and fully independent self-evaluation, particularly among learners with lower English proficiency. The integrated approach should therefore not be understood as a short-term technique that immediately produces autonomous writers. Instead, it represents a sustained pedagogical framework through which responsibility can gradually shift from teacher guidance to learner regulation. Teachers should explicitly model argument construction, train students to provide and interpret feedback, address both global and linguistic aspects of writing, and preserve multiple opportunities for reflection and revision. Further longitudinal and mixed-methods research is needed to determine whether the observed changes are maintained across topics and transferred to independent writing contexts.

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INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Participation in this study was voluntary. Before data collection, the teachers, learners, and the parents or legal guardians of learners below the age of independent consent received information concerning the study's purposes, procedures, potential risks, benefits, confidentiality protections, and intended use of the data. Written informed consent was obtained from adult participants and parents or guardians, while assent was obtained from participating learners. Participants were informed that they could decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The qualitative data generated in this study include interview recordings, interview transcripts, classroom observation notes, reflective records, and coded analytical documents. These materials are not publicly available because they contain potentially identifiable information and are subject to the confidentiality conditions stated in the participants' consent agreements. De-identified extracts that do not compromise participant privacy may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable academic request. Access will be subject to institutional approval, ethical review requirements, data-protection regulations, and confirmation that the proposed use is consistent with the original consent conditions. Public deposition of the complete dataset is therefore not permitted.

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