

## Investing Logical English Essay Writing Obstacles: A Case Study of for the Japanese EFL Learners

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### **Abstract:**

While various educational approaches have been implemented, one persistent difficulties for Japanese English learners is writing logical essays or papers. This study aims to identify the factors hindering their ability to write logically in English, focusing on whether the issue stems from a lack of English proficiency or difficulties in forming ideas and arguments, even in Japanese. To explore this question, 25 Japanese university students with low English proficiency were asked to write opinion essays on the same topic, “Are Smartphones Beneficial for English Learning?” first in Japanese and then in English. The writing process was recorded on video to capture moments of hesitation, pauses, and struggles. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand their thought processes and challenges during writing. The findings revealed that students who struggled to articulate ideas in Japanese also failed to produce coherent essays in English, suggesting that the root cause lies in their inability to form logical arguments in their native language. This indicates that improving English proficiency alone may not resolve the issue; instead, developing logical thinking skills in Japanese is equally essential. This study highlights the need for an integrated approach to English education that combines language skills with training in critical and logical thinking, ensuring that students can express their ideas effectively in both Japanese and English.