

**AN ANALYSIS OF RHETORICAL STRUCTURE AND GRAMMATICAL
ERRORS MADE BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN WRITING
RESEARCH PROPOSAL INTRODUCTION AT UNIVERSITAS ISLAM
INDRAGIRI**

THESIS



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*This thesis is submitted to fulfill one of the requirements to obtain
a degree in Master of Education*

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ABSTRAK

Yurizal.2016. An analysis of Rhetorical Structure and Grammatical Errors Made by English Department Students in Writing Research Proposal Introduction at Islamic University of Indragiri. Thesis. Program PascaSarjana University Negeri Padang.

Penelitian yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana retorika penulisan pendahuluan proposal penelitian mahasiswa pendidikan bahasa inggris dan juga tentang kesalahan struktur tata bahasa atau grammatical errors di dalam penulisan pendahuluan proposal tersebut. Retorika pedoman yang digunakan sebagai pedoman adalah teori yang dibuat oleh Weisber dan Buker yaitu the five stages of introduction. 1) Statement about the field of study (stage 1), 2) statement about aspect already studied by other researcher (stage 2), 3) statement that indicate the need for more investigation (stage 3), 4) very specific statement giving the purpose of the study (stage 4), 5) optional statement that give value of the study and for grammatical errors, the theory used propose by Dulay et al (in terms of tenses, preposition, articles, active and passive voice, verbs and morphological errors. penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan sumber data berupa pendahuluan proposal penelitian sejumlah 18 buah. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan catatan pengkodean untuk mengetahui tentang retorikal penulisan dan menganalisis kesalahan tata bahasa dengan mencatat, mengumpulkan dan mendeskripsikan kesalahan tata bahasa. Temuan penelitian ini secara garis besar masih memiliki masalah di stage 1, topic permasalahan masih ditulis terlalu luas dari masalah yg di diskusikan, dan juga masalah kedua terletak pada stage 2 dan stage 3, hamper semua tulisan mahasiswa tidak menjelaskan tentang previous studies dan juga tentang gap yang ada didalam proposal tersebut, mahasiswa juga tidak menuliskan tentang statemen yang menjelaskan need for more investigation. Sedangkan masalah tata bahasa atau grammar, kesalahan yang paling besar adalah tentang penggunaan tenses, dan yang kedua adalah penggunaan verb”be”.

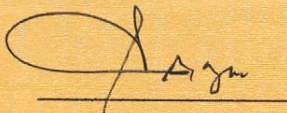
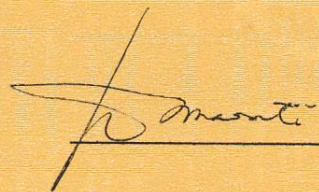
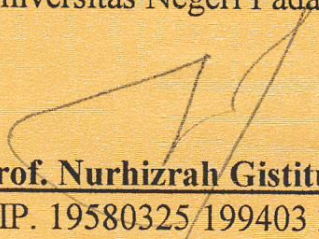
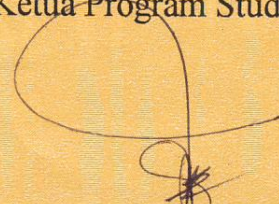
ABSTRACT

Yurizal.2016. An Analysis of Rhetorical Structure and Grammatical Errors Made by English Department Students in Writing Research Proposal Introduction at Islamic University of Indragiri. Thesis. Graduate Program of State University of Padang.

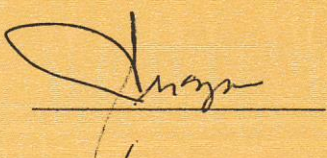
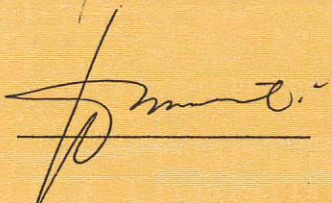
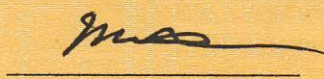

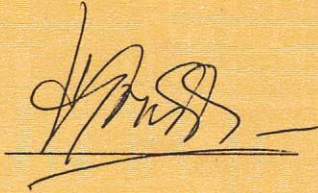
Many novice proposal writers do not realize that what is written in their proposal is a reflection of what will be produced. A careless designed and written proposal will result in questionable findings and make the readers difficult to understand of what the writers mean in their proposal writing. This paper aims at revealing the rhetorical structure and grammatical problems found on students' research proposal introduction. The guidance in investigating the students' rhetorical structure is the five stages of introduction proposed by Weissberg and Buker, there are five stages that will be discussed and to find out the grammatical problem, the theory proposed by Dulay et al is used. This is a qdescriptive qualitative research. The sample is 18 documents or students proposal introduction. The data for rhetorical structure is taken by using coding sheet note, and while for grammatical problem is taken by using syntax and morphological taxonomy. In general, the findings show that the students still have problem in writing research proposal introduction based on the rhetorical structure. The problems found on the stage I,II,III. Stage I is identified too general, the statement about the field of study is not closely related to the actual research problem. The aspect already studied (stage II) were not stated by the students in their proposal introduction. Problem is also found on the stage III. The statement about a gap on the research and the need for more investigation were not stated in the proposal. Based on the five stage, these stages must be put in the introduction section. The grammatical problems found in the students proposal introduction such as the wrong use of tense, the wrong use of verb "be", misspell, word order, preposition, article, and plural ending (s).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

There are four language skills that should be considered by the English as Foreign language (EFL) learners in learning English. Writing is one of those skills that should be mastered by the students, especially in the tertiary level. Islamic university of Indragiri (UNISI) is one of the tertiary levels which offers writing classes for its students. It starts from the courses of Writing I up to courses of Writing IV and even to an extensive Writing. It is hoped that after taking those writing classes, the students are able to write a good English composition in the research proposal writing.

The research proposal is fundamental part of the process of thesis writing. Without a clear proposal, it is unlikely that the writer will be able to embark on a systematic investigation and discussion of a problematic issue in the area of the research. Hardling (2004) states that writing a research proposal is an exercise in carrying out research and writing account of that research activity. And Brookes and Grundy (1991:106) confirm that most of the students who write a research proposal will be trying to prove a set of implicationally related to the students' hypothesis. According to Robson (1994), the research proposal is a planning document that outlines someone's thought about a research problem and describes what is to be studied and how. It means that a

research proposal is intended to convince the readers that the researcher has a worthwhile research project and that researcher has the competence and the work-plan to complete the project. Generally, a research proposal should contain all the key elements involved in the research process and include sufficient information for the readers to evaluate the proposed study. In short, be a research proposal is such a guideline and a plan for a researcher in doing his or her research proposal.

In writing a research proposal, a researcher should begin his or her project with introduction section. Introduction section is a first part in a research proposal. As the first part, the introduction plays an important role because it sets the stage for the entire study. An introduction should contain all necessary descriptions of what a researcher wants to do and why he or she wants to do. Weissberg and Buker (1990:20) say that the introduction serves as an orientation for the readers of the report, giving them the perspective they need to understand the detailed information coming in the later sections.

According to Wilkinson (1991:96) introduction is the part of the paper that provides readers with the background information for the research reported in the paper. Its purpose is to establish a framework for the research, so that the reader can understand how it is related to other parts of the research. Thus, The main purpose of the introduction is to provide the necessary background or context for the research problem. How to frame the research problem is perhaps the biggest problem in proposal writing. It is clear that the introduction is such a lead-in to help the writer to follow the logic of the proposal; it states the

statement of the problem, theoretical perspective, purpose of the research, and limitation of the study.

Nevertheless, writing the introduction section of a research proposal is known to be troublesome, especially for many novice researchers. Many novice proposal writers do not realize that what is written in their proposals introduction is a reflection of what they will produce. A carelessly-designed and written proposal introduction will result in questionable findings. This idea is supported by Swales (1990:137), Paltridge and Starfield (2007:82) who state that writing the introduction is known to be burdensome for some researchers. They also found that nearly all novice researchers are having difficulties with getting started on a piece of writing.

The difficulties in writing the research proposal introduction section might be reflected of some factors. Swales and Feak (2012:4) argue that the length of a text, the language use, and the purpose of writing can influence the researcher's ability to compose such a well-written introduction. Besides, they believe that the requirement of the readership about the organization or the structure of an introduction might burden the researcher to think about what comes first and what should be written next (Swales and Feak, 2012:328). Thus, in order to be able to write a well-written introduction and to obtain the acceptance of the readership, the students should employ a widely used organizational pattern, which is called rhetorical structure (Swales and Feak, 2012:328).

Rhetorical structure is a way “frame” or to “organize” the writing to communicate ideas which functions is to shape the ideas progression (Hult, 1987:19). It is supported by Swales and feak (2004) who argues that the researchers need rhetorical structure to address and to arrange their goals, current capacities, problems, and criteria of evaluation in writing introduction. Then he proposed move to be included in an effective introduction paper. The moves are establishing a research territory (move 1), establishing a niche (move 2), and occupying the niche (move 3). The term niche is defined as a context where a particular piece of research makes particularly good sense for the readers.

Similarly, Weisberg and Buker (1990:22) propose five stages that can be used to identify the content or element in introduction section. They are stage I (general statement about a field of research to provide the readers with a setting for the problem to be reported), stage II (more specific statement about the aspects of the problem already studied by other researchers), stage III (statement that indicate the need for more investigation), stage IV (very specific statement giving the purpose/objective of the writer’s study), and stage V (optional statement that give a value of justification for carrying out the study).

Eventually, the rhetorical structure has taken the interest of many educational researchers to investigate Swales’ CARS model employed in research proposal introduction (Swales, 1990:138); Paltridge and Starfield, 2007:86) nevertheless some of the previous studies have done by some researchers such as Feng (2006) and Ari P (2008) who focused on investigating the absence of CARS

structure in research proposal introduction. Nora Fudhla (2014) also conducted a research by using Swales' CARS model to identify the students' introduction section writing. Although several studies have been done by researchers about rhetorical structure of research proposal introduction, but it still needs further information about how the students write this part is still needed. Hence, a further research is needed to be conducted. In this part, the analysis of students' writing research proposal will be analyzed by using five stages of introduction that is proposed by Weisberg and Buker, 1990:20.

In this case, the researcher had the preliminary research at the Islamic University of Indragiri, especially in English department. Based on the preliminary result on February, 5th 2015, many of English department students get difficulties and problems in writing research proposal introduction section. Based on the interview with some of students at Islamic University of Indragiri, The students said that writing a research proposal is difficult. Although they have taken research methodology class for two semesters which provides them with the concept of how to conduct a research proposal, but they still complaint that they need more efforts to compose a well-develop research proposal, especially introduction section. And then, the researcher also interviewed their lecturer who are as advisor, they said that Many of students' research proposals are not in a good rhetorical structure that makes their proposal introduction messy, because it is not follow the rhetorical structure that should be had in the proposal introduction, actually rhetorical structure is very needed to make their proposal writing in good flow.

Besides that, the researcher also checked some of the students' research proposal. It was found that the difficulties are not only in writing the rhetorical structure of introduction section, but also there are some errors that were found on students' writing. The first one is in using of grammar, many of students' writing are not in correct grammar, sometimes the used of subject and verb agreement are not appropriate. As it is known that in a sentence, the subject and the verb follow should be in agreement. The second one is in using the appropriate punctuation. As it is known that punctuation is needed to make their writing understandable, because the punctuation is to structure and organize their writing. Punctuation is important, because it tells the readers where they need to stop, to pause, or to emphasize. If the students do not use it properly, it will make the readers confused. Punctuation illustrates the relations among the ideas and between the parts of sentences.

For addition, the students tend to make errors in constructing phrases or clauses as well. They do not construct the phrases in a correct arrangement. As known that syntax is about the rules or pattern relations, which govern the ways of how words are combined to form phrases to become sentences. Syntax is very important for the students to be noticed, because syntax is related to the composition of words that are arranged in a phrase, clause, or sentence, so that students should pay more attention to their sentence arrangement, in order it becomes a good composition of English writing. The example of student's writing: *hearing aids we will capture or hear the sound*. From this sentence, the student is not paying attention to the sentence construction and also the diction

that he or she uses in his or her sentence. As stated by Miller (2002:56) syntax has to do with how words are put together to build bigger clauses or phrases, and with how clauses are put together to build sentences. Another example of students' error in constructing sentence is as follows:

Many students who has difficulty in hearing ability in the English language and there are some student that even they do not like it at all, they are difficult to improve their hearing in which aspects of the cause is the lack of exercises to improve this ability. To improve students' skill heard that the easiest technique and favored pupil or student by using words that easily hear, clear, and regular everyday wear. The use of gap-filling technique and picture guessing is an easy way to improve this capability. Based on this example above, it can be seen that the student is not only making error in constructing sentence, but also in choosing the appropriate words.

Then, their lecturers said that they often find mistakes in the students' research proposals, especially in introduction section. Many of students' research proposals are considered unwell-structured and sometimes the students do not write their proposal introduction based on its rhetorical structure. Besides the students also do not pay attention to the used of grammar, using appropriate word and punctuation and also in constructing good sentence. In addition, it was found from several proposal seminars that the students' introductions written are suggested to be improved. Even, some of those are suggested to be changed.

Considering the result of the preliminary research above and the real problem of the students in writing research proposal introduction, the researcher is interested in analyzing the rhetorical structure of research proposal introduction and grammatical errors in writing research proposal introduction made by the English Department students of Islamic University of Indragiri.

B. Identification of the Problems

Based on the background of the problem above, many students have difficulties in writing research proposal introduction. The problem is related to the rhetorical structure in research proposal introduction. Many of students' research proposal introductions are not in good rhetorical structure. They do not pay attention to the rhetorical structure in research proposal introduction. As it is known that in writing research proposal introduction, there is rhetorical structure that should be followed by the researcher. Besides they also have problems or make errors in using correct punctuation, in grammar, word order and also in constructing sentences.

C. Focus of the Research

Based on the problems identified at the previous stage, the focus of the research is about the students' problems in writing a research proposal introduction, in terms of the rhetorical structure and grammatical problems. It is conducted by analyzing the rhetorical structure of research proposals made by

the students at Islamic university of Indragiri. And this part of introduction section is limited to background of the problem. Then, focus of the research is also about the types of grammatical problems made by the students. Then, it also concerns with the causes of grammatical problems in writing research proposal introduction.

D. Research Questions

The research questions, they are as follow:

1. What are the students' problems in writing the rhetorical structure of research proposal introduction?
2. What are the types of grammatical problems found in the students' writing research proposal introduction?
3. What are the causes of grammatical problems of the students in writing research proposal introduction?

E. Purpose of the Research

Based on the research questions above, the purpose of the research is to find out:

1. The students' problems in writing the rhetorical structure of research proposal introduction.
2. The types of grammatical problems made by the students in writing research proposal introduction.

3. The causes of grammatical problems made by the students in writing research proposal introduction.

F. Significance of the Research

The research hopefully gives contribution in English language learning, especially for:

Practically, this research will provide information about the students' problems in writing rhetorical structure, syntactic and diction errors in writing research proposal introduction.

Theoretically, the results of this research are expectedly beneficial for English Department Education, especially for students and lectures. For students, the result will provide information about their problems in writing research proposal introduction, so that in the years to come, they can be more focus in writing research proposal, especially in rhetorical structure and grammar.

For lecturers, the result of this research can be used to help them understand better the problems made by the students in writing research proposal. So they can provide meaningful feedback to their students in writing research proposal.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding about the title of the research, the definition of the key terms is presented as follows:

- 1) Research proposal is the formal, systematic application method to study of problems. In this study, research proposal means the students writing on introduction section.
- 2) Rhetorical structure is parts of an introduction that can be organize the writing process.
- 3) Grammatical error is the wrong use of appropriate words in writing sentences.
- 4) Error is a deviation, when a learner has not learned something and consistently gets it wrong

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

Based on the research questions related to the Rhetorical structure and grammatical made by English department students of Islamic University of Indragiri in writing research proposal introduction , the result can be concluded as follow:

1. Rhetorical Structure

Based on the result of the analysis of the students' research proposal introduction, there are some problems that have been occurred during the writing research proposal introduction section. It was found that the students do have difficulties in writing research proposal introduction. It can be said that they have not been able to write or to compose a well-structure writing based on the five stage of introduction proposed by Weissberg and Buker. It is proved by findings which show that all the students had already stated the stage or move 1 (setting/statement about the field of study) but the writing is considered too general and is repeated many times in the introduction. Furthermore, almost all of the students had not been able to state the stage 2 that is statement about aspect already studied by other researchers, based on the five stages of introduction the previous research must be put in the rhetorical of introduction. Besides, the students also had not been able to explain about the gap in the research and statement about the need for more investigation (stage 3).

2. Grammatical Problems

Related to the grammatical problems, there were several problems that have already been detected, they are as follow:

Tenses was 17 errors, missing verb be was 19 errors, article was 4 errors, word order was 6 errors, word choice was 8 errors, plural ending(s) was 17 errors, preposition was 9 errors, misspell was 4 errors. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that students were still in grammar.

B. Implications

There are some implications that are needed by the EFL students' related to understanding and ability in Writing a good research proposal, such as:

1. People or readers will understand easily of what the writer writes on the paper, if the writer has a good skill written language such as in writing research proposal. Having good quality of writing is very needed in this academic writing. That is why the writer needs to have a good skill about aspects of writing, especially the rhetorical structure of introduction. In this case, the rhetorical structure problems that were found though the research damage students' performance and capability in the written language skill.
2. The grammatical errors or problems hold student's or writer's development in the writing skill. As a result, it is difficult for them to write a good composition of writing such as in writing for academic setting.

3. By conducting this research, the researcher, the students are able to acknowledge the bad effect of having bad writing skill. In addition, as a lecture to be, they are able to reflect themselves and eager to have better understanding in writing for academic setting.

C. Suggestions

Based on the conclusions and implications of the research above, there are some suggestions that can be identified, as follows:

1. It is hoped that EFL students who are writing research proposal should pay more attention about the rhetorical structure in the research proposal introduction. It is very important to make the flow of writing in a good way and organize the introduction section.
2. It is suggested for the teacher or lecturer who teaches research methodology, they should teach the students more about the rhetorical structure in the research proposal, especially in introduction section.
3. This thesis is not perfect yet, so suggestion and comment is very needed to make it perfect and also It is suggested for others researchers who interested in researching about the rhetorical structure of introduction, in this case, the future researchers can use another theory to conduct their research in rhetorical structure.

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