

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher explains the research context, research questions, research objectives, research significance, research scope and limitation, and the definition of key term.

A. Context of The Study

The requirement for university students to publish academic articles has become increasingly common in Indonesian higher education. Based on BAN-PT accreditation instrument, specifically criteria 9 on Outputs and Achievements of the Tri Dharma, student scientific publications are included in the category of research outputs that are assessed as indicators of study program quality. The fulfillment of these outputs directly contributes to an increase in the accreditation score of the study program. Scientific publications here include journals, proceedings, joint works with lecturers, and independent publications by students. So, it is not surprising that many universities have begun integrating academic publishing into their curriculum to improve students' research literacy, prepare them for scholarly communication also for better accreditation. Recent studies show that there is a national trend encouraging undergraduate students to produce publishable scientific articles as part of their coursework or peak requirements.¹ This trend also appears in English Education department at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, where students in Academic Writing courses are often required to write research based articles that follow scientific writing agreement. However, although the main objective is to prepare students for publication, many of these final project articles have not been published because students are still developing the skills necessary to meet academic writing standards.

¹ Nyimas Shoffah Shofiyatus Salamah and Wahyudin Darmalaksana, "Peningkatan Penulisan Artikel Mahasiswa bagi Akselerasi Publikasi Ilmiah Pendidikan Tinggi," *Edukasi: Journal of Educational Research* 1, no. 2 (August 2021): 116–26, <https://doi.org/10.57032/edukasi.v1i2.68>.

This growing trend presents both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, integrating article writing into the curriculum helps students become more familiar with academic genres, increases their exposure to research conventions, and encourages them to produce more structured and original writing. On the other hand, research shows that undergraduate students often struggle with key aspects of academic writing, especially in organizing the Introduction section of their research articles. Students frequently face difficulties establishing a research territory, identifying gaps, and clearly presenting the purpose of their studies.² These challenges can lead to incomplete rhetorical structure and arguments that require further development, which may make it more difficult for the articles to align with publication standards.

Because of these difficulties, it becomes essential to understand the crucial role of the introduction section in academic articles. The Introduction section in a research article plays a crucial role in guiding readers to understand the background, relevance, and objectives of the research. In this section, the author introduces the research topic, explains its importance, and provides the theoretical context that serves as the framework for the investigation. The Introduction section also provides space to summarize relevant literature and highlight the uniqueness or contribution of the research.³ Therefore, the Introduction serves as a fundamental component in the preparation of a clear and convincing research article, helping readers understand why the research was conducted and how it relates to the broader academic literature.

In addition, students may have difficulty developing the appropriate structure and presentation for the introduction. Formulating strong arguments and organizing information logically and coherently requires careful thought

² Ulil Fitriyah, "Rhetorical Moves In Thesis Introduction Written By English Major Students," *PARADIGM: Journal of Language and Literary Studies* 3, no. 2 (December 2020): 119–32, <https://doi.org/10.18860/prdg.v3i2.10229>.

³ Mohsen Tavakol and David O'Brien, "The Importance of Crafting a Good Introduction to Scholarly Research: Strategies for Creating an Effective and Impactful Opening Statement," *International Journal of Medical Education* 14 (June 2023): 84–87, <https://doi.org/10.5116/ijme.6499.82af>.

and careful planning.⁴ To understand these challenges, rhetorical move analysis provides a useful analytical framework. This approach examines how writers construct their texts through organized communicative moves. The most influential model is Swales' Create A Research Space (CARS) model, which identifies three essential moves for writing Introductions: establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche.⁵ Recent genre based studies have shown that undergraduate students often display incomplete or inconsistent move realization when writing their Introduction sections, suggesting a need for closer examination of their rhetorical patterns.⁶

Moreover, rhetorical move analysis is particularly important because it serves as a diagnostic tool that reveals which parts of the Introduction students are struggle to construct effectively, thereby informing targeted pedagogical interventions. In this case, final project articles written by undergraduate students represent an important context for such investigation because these texts reflect the early stages of students' academic maturity. Although students receive guidance from lecturers, their writing often reveals intuitive rather than strategic decision making, particularly in how they organize the Introduction section. Previous research on undergraduate thesis writing also indicates that students' rhetorical awareness is still developing, and their move patterns often incomplete or obscurity.⁷ Since fifth-semester students are still in the intermediate stage of learning academic writing, analyzing their Introduction sections can provide insights into the challenges they face before their work reaches publishable quality.

⁴ Yustus Sentus Halum, *The Rhetorical Moves In The Students' Introduction Parts Of Theses Writing*, 10, no. 3 (2024).

⁵ John M. Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*, Cambridge Applied Linguistics (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁶ Fitriyah, "Rhetorical Moves In Thesis Introduction Written By English Major Students."

⁷ Agung Suhadi, "Analysis of Students' Understanding in Using Rhetorical Moves on Thesis Abstract," *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature* 10, no. 2 (January 2023): 1756–67, <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v10i2.3042>.

Drawing on these genre based and rhetorical studies, many researchers have applied move analysis to examine how students construct the Introduction sections of the academic texts. For example, Halum (2024) with article under the title “*The Rhetorical Moves in The Students’ Introduction Parts of Theses Writing*” investigated the Introduction chapters of undergraduate theses and reported that students often struggle with their thesis introductions, typically using a structure that begins with establishing a territory, then a niche, and finally occupying the niche. Difficulties in articulating gaps in research may be linked to a limited exploration of previous studies, often reflected in the literature review.⁸

Similarly, Mustaqim and Sylvia (2024) with article under the title “*Exploring the Rhetorical Structures in Undergraduate Thesis Introductions: A Genre Analysis*” examined the move patterns in English Education students’ theses and revealed inconsistent use of advanced steps reveals challenges in crafting compelling introductions, highlighting the need for genre awareness. The findings suggest EFL teachers should focus on not only core moves but also the nuanced optional steps that improve rhetorical effectiveness.⁹

Another study by Wijaya and Bram (2022) with article under the title “*Rhetorical Structures of Introduction Sections in Sinta Indexed Journals*” analyzed the rhetorical structures of Sinta indexed journal Introduction sections and found that overall follows Swales’ CARS model, although there are slight variations in the order of the steps.¹⁰ Although these studies provide valuable insights into rhetorical challenges in academic writing, they were conducted in

⁸ Fitriyah, “Rhetorical Moves In Thesis Introduction Written By English Major Students.”

⁹ Muhammad Haris Mustaqim and Rizka Sylvia, “Exploring The Rhetorical Structures In Undergraduate Thesis Introductions: A Genre Analysis,” *Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching* 8, no. 2 (December 2024): 711–21, <https://doi.org/10.30743/ll.v8i2.10212>.

¹⁰ Lisa Wijaya and Barli Bram, “Rhetorical Structures of Introduction Sections in Sinta-Indexed Journals,” *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra* 8, no. 1 (May 2022): 181–88, <https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v8i1.1659>.

different institutional contexts and mostly focused on theses rather than final project articles.

Despite the growing number of studies on rhetorical move analysis, limited research has examined students' final project articles, especially those written as coursework rather than formal theses. Even fewer studies focus specifically on English Education students at the undergraduate level, whose academic writing development is still in progress. Moreover, little attention has been given to fifth-semester students, who are at an intermediate stage of learning academic writing and are beginning to write texts with a stronger focus on research. In addition, many previous studies tend to focus mainly on identifying the presence or absence of moves and steps, classifying them as obligatory or optional, and providing illustrative examples. While previous studies have made important contributions, they tend to focus primarily on descriptive mapping. The present study complements this approach by offering a more detailed analysis of move realization and by examining how incomplete or missing moves and steps relate to the overall organization of the introduction section. In this way, the study considers what the patterns of realization suggest about the rhetorical structure of the text. These gaps highlight the need to examine how students at this level realize their introduction sections.

Therefore, the present study focuses on analyzing the rhetorical moves in the Introduction sections of final project articles written by fifth-semester English Education students of class 5E at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. By identifying the move structures and examining the extent to which they align with Swales' CARS model, this study aims to provide insights into the students' rhetorical realization. The findings are expected to contribute to the improvement of academic writing instruction and support the development of more effective pedagogical strategies for teaching academic writing.

B. Research Questions

Based on the context of study above, the formula of the research questions are:

1. How do fifth-semester English Education students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung realize the rhetorical moves in the Introduction sections of their final project articles based on Swales' CARS model?
2. How are rhetorical moves sequenced across the introduction sections of the students' final project articles?

C. Research Objectives

Considering the research questions presented above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze how fifth semester English Education students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung realize the rhetorical moves in the introduction sections of their final project articles based on Swales' CARS model.
2. To examine how rhetorical moves are sequenced across the introduction sections of the students' final project articles.

D. Significance of Study

The findings of this study are likely to make major contributions both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study will contribute to the literature on rhetorical move analysis, specifically in the context of Introduction section writing by undergraduate English Education students. This study contributes to a better understanding of the development of academic writing skill at the intermediate level by investigating how fifth-semester students realize the rhetorical moves of Swales' CARS model. Practically, the conclusions of this study can be useful for:

1. Students can use this as a reflection tool to improve their academic writing skills, particularly in arranging the Introduction section according to the rhetorical structure necessary in research articles.
2. Lecturers in Academic Writing courses can use this as a diagnostic tool to design more effective instructional strategies, learning resources, and feedback mechanisms for teaching rhetorical structure in writing Introduction section of research articles.
3. The English Education Department is considering improving curriculum design, syllabi, and academic writing requirements to better support students in producing structured and publishable research articles.

Furthermore, this study can be used as a resource for future researchers interested in rhetorical move analysis, genre based writing studies, or the implementation of Swales' CARS model in a variety of academic settings.

E. Scope and Limitation of Study

This study analyzes the rhetorical moves in the Introduction sections of final project articles written by fifth-semester students from class 5E in the English Education Department at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. The analysis only identifies and analyzes the rhetorical moves in the introduction section using Swales' Create A Research Space (CARS) model.

This research doesn't cover other sections of the students' final project articles, like the Methods, Results, Discussion, or Conclusion. It also does not assess linguistic accuracy, writing quality, or coherence, except for identifying rhetorical moves.

The study is further limited to the selected class (5E) and does not represent all fifth-semester students or other group in the department.

Therefore, the findings reflect the rhetorical patterns specific to this group and may not be generalized to a wider population.

F. Definition of Key Term

To avoid misunderstandings in comprehending the term used in this study, the following are definition of several key term:

1. Rhetorical move analysis is the process of identifying and describing functional units of text, known as moves and steps that serve specific communicative purposes in the structure of academic genres. In this study, rhetorical move analysis refers to examining how students realize the Introduction section based on the move structure proposed by Swales.
2. Final Project Articles are research based academic assignments written by students as part of their Academic Writing course. These articles are similar to research articles in structure and content, but are specifically designed for coursework and are not published in journals, proceedings, or other academic media.
3. Fifth-semester English Education students are students enrolled in the English Education Department at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung who have completed Academic Writing course. In this study, the term specifically refers to students in class 5E who have produced final project articles and represent an intermediate level of academic writing competence.