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Investigating and Examining the Structure and the Difficulties of Tertiary Learners in Essay Writing: Rhetorically-Based Approach

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Abstract---Rhetorical approach is a tool that can be used to analyze essay writing. Not only to analyze but also to help us making an essay. By using rhetorical, the writer can narrate, describe, classify, and give example. This research discusses about the structure and the difficulties of tertiary learners in essay writing based on rhetorical approach. The sample of this research was tertiary learners and they became the source of the data in the research. Writing test was used as the instrument in the research. Here, the researcher asked the tertiary learners to write an essay. Then, analyzing the data based on rhetorically approach. The result of the study showed that 55,56% tertiary learners are able in writing an essay based on the rhetorically approach. And Based on the analysis, the researcher found tertiary learners' difficulties in essay writing, namely grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence, misspelling, developing and organizing idea, and arranging or building sentences are still based on first language..

Keywords---essay writing, examining, investigating, rhetorically-based, tertiary learners.

Introduction

Writing is one of the skill in English. It is developed by habit Warburton (2020), It is a process to think and to express some ideas, thoughts and opinions in written form (Brown, 2000; Hammer, 2004; Meyers, 2014; Nunan, 2003; Rivers, 2018; Warburton, 2020; White, 1986). It also produces a language symbol (Ramelan & MA, 1992; Tarigan, 2008). Writing is not an easy task for all people, especially for students. To have a good writing, students should be able in expressing their ideas and insights in written form. And it is difficult to be done. In writing, there are some difficulties that students undergone or faced, namely vocabulary and language use Ariyanti & Fitriana (2017); Jordan (2001); Pratiwi (2016); Riemenschneider et al. (2021); Widiastuti (2010), grammar Ariyanti & Fitriana (2017); Handiani (2017); Pratiwi (2016); Yoandita (2019), organizing and developing idea (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Yoandita, 2019). Besides that, self-efficacy also affects to the students' writing (Lee & List, 2021).

Essay writing is one of academic writing. It is very prominent for tertiary learner as their basic to be a good writer. Essay is a piece of writing (Langan & Winstanley, 2014; Meyers, 2014; Warburton, 2020). Essay is a necessary thing and it is needed to be extended in academic writing, especially in persuasive essay (Jo, 2021). In writing essay, the tertiary learners should be able to build a good thesis statement. Because it is the key to write an essay. A good essay should have structure in writing essay. The basic structure of essay consists of introduction, body and conclusion (Langan & Winstanley, 2014; Meyers, 2014). In building introduction is not easy. A writer should be able to create an interesting topic so that it can attract or catch the readers' attention. Besides that, an essay writing should be rhetoric so that can attract the readers (Lim & Mali, 2021).

The research about the structure and the difficulties of tertiary learners based on rhetorically approach are interested to be investigated. Relating to the research has ever discussed by some researchers. First, Ariyanti & Fitriana (2017), have ever discussed the difficulties of students' in Essay writing. In this research, they discussed what students faced during they wrote an essay. And they found that the students have difficulties in vocabulary, diction, organization, spelling and grammatical, cohesion and coherence. In their research, they did not investigate yet about the structure of students' essay writing. She just focused on students' difficulties without seeing whether students' essay writing have had basic structure of essay or not. They also did not explain whether the students are able or not to build thesis statement and give description of thesis statement and it is called main idea. A good essay writing should be based on rhetoric. Rhetoric is important and useful in essay writing. It can help tertiary learners to process words in essay writing Miller (2014), and attract the readers to read the essay (Lim & Mali, 2021).

The next previous research about "A Rhetorical Analysis approach to EAP (English for Academic Purposes)". In the research, Neff Van Aestselaer said that the Spanish learners can transfer the rhetorical rule from the first language (Spanish) to the second language (English) especially in the case of using 'we' and passive (van Aertselaer, 2006). In this research she just focused on EAP (English for Academic Purposes) not in essay writing and she did not discuss the

difficulties of students in EAP. Based on the explanation above, the researcher wants to investigate and examine the structure and the difficulties of tertiary learners in essay writing based on rhetorically approach (Nigg & Courneya, 1998; Butt & Ur Rehman, 2010).

Theoretical Basis

Structure of essay writing

Essay is a piece of writing (Langan & Winstanley, 2014; Meyers, 2014; Warburton, 2020). Essay has basic structure. And it is the core of academic study (Warburton, 2020). It has three components, namely introduction, body of paragraph and conclusion (Langan & Winstanley, 2014; Meyers, 2014; Warburton, 2020).

- **Introduction**
In introduction, a writer provides a topic. It must be started with a pin so that can attract or catch the readers' attention. It must give some information that related with the topic. The topic should be general for the reader so that they are easy to get the main thing and directly it will be more specific and lead to the thesis statement. Here, thesis statement like a road map because it will lead you to write the body of paragraph. That's why it is the central point.
- **Body**
Body of essay consists of some paragraphs. It should describe and support the main point of thesis statement. They should be able to give detail explanation. So, here the writer should be able to organize the idea and make supporting sentences of the main idea.
- **Conclusion**
Conclusion tells about all the major point in essay writing. It consists of summarizing of your essay.

To make it easy to get understanding about the basic structure of essay writing, it can be figured as following.

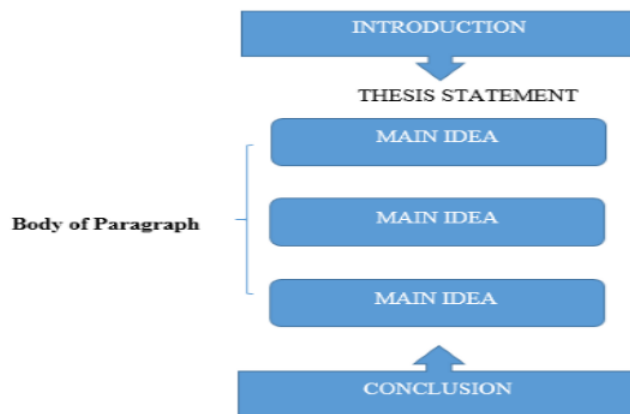


Figure 1. The basic structure of essay writing

Essay writing process

To write a good essay, there are some steps should be followed. The steps consist of planning, drafting, editing (editing and revising), and final version (Hammer, 2004).

- **Planning**
Before writing, it's better if you plan first what you should write. In this step, there are three core components you should consider before writing, namely (1) you should decide your objective to write, (2) considering about the language style, and (3) you should consider an interesting topic to be your content of your writing.
- **Drafting**
It is the first variant for a piece of writing. So, in this case, the students will be permitted to develop and organize idea, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- **Editing**
In editing, the students reread draft of students' essay writing to look at the errors and mistake. If they find them, they should revise them. This activity has function to minimize the errors and mistake.
- **Final Version**
Final version is the last step. It can be done after the three steps (planning, drafting, and editing) have done. Of course, the final version is different with the planning and drafting. Because it has undergone changes after editing process. There is some unimportant information will be deleted. After finishing all the steps, then it can be sent to be read by the readers.

Students' difficulties in writing

In the previous has been said that writing is not an easy task for all people. It needs skill to write a good essay. Writing is also can be said as the habitual (Warburton, 2020). If it becomes a habit for someone, it is easy for her/him to express her/his idea in written form. But for some students, writing is not habitual for them that's why they have difficulties when they are asked to write an essay. Pratiwi (2016), said that students' difficulties in writing consisted of (1) Linguistic aspect. It consists of language use and vocabulary. (2) Cognitive aspect. It is about organization and mechanic aspect and Physiology aspect. It tells about content aspect (Ishikawa, 2015; Ferriman, 2013).

Next, Ariyanti & Fitriana (2017), described the students' difficulties in writing such as organization, diction, vocabulary, misspelling, grammatical, cohesion and coherence. Then, the other students' difficulties in writing that stated by Hadiani are generic structure, grammar, spelling (Handiani, 2017). It can be summarized that the tertiary learners' difficulties in writing based on the previous research are language use, vocabulary, organization, mechanic, content, diction, misspelling, cohesion and coherence and generic structure (Cheng & Lee, 2018; Loureiro, & Bettencourt, 2014).

Rhetorical approach in essay writing

Before analyzing the data, it's better if knowing about perspective about rhetoric. Rhetorical Approach is good for analyzing essay (Sánchez Cuervo, 2016). Rhetoric refers to written form that can attract readers effectively (Lim & Mali, 2021). Rhetoric points to the concept of immersed logo in semantics-pragmatics (Jebb, 1909). Then, Albadalejo have huge point about rhetoric. Rhetoric is a model to produce a text and a tool of analyzing text or essay (Albadalejo, 1999). It can be concluded that rhetoric is a tool to analyze a text (essay) and model to produce a text and it is about written form (Blair, 1995; Seneviratne et al., 2010).

A good essay should be based on rhetorical that consist of three premises. They are used in starting teaching and studying essay writing. The three premises are (1) looking a text from their full context, (2) Understanding about small and huge culture from complex insight, and (3) doing interaction (Miller, 2014). Rhetorical function point to transfer communication Swalles (2011), generic structure Samraj (2005), and generic transfers (Bunton, 2002). It is also as the fundamental or core part in organizing and developing idea such as narrating, describing, classifying and giving example (Trimble, 1985).

Method

This research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative research (Creswell, 2010; Ishtiaq, 2019). In this research, the writer wanted to describe the structure of tertiary learners' writing in Essay. The writer used eighty-one tertiary learners as the sample of this research. To get the data, the writer asked the tertiary learners to write an essay. The topic is about COVID-19. They were given an hour to complete their task. After they have finished to do it, then their writing was collected. Then, the researcher analyzed the data. The procedure to analyze the data consisted of (1) Reading the tertiary learner' answer sheet, (2) Seeing and identifying the structure of the tertiary learners' essay writing based on rhetorical approach, (3) Classifying the tertiary students' difficulties in essay writing, and (4) Summarizing the finding of the research (Severino, 1993; Adsanatham, 2012).

Finding and Discussion

The structure of tertiary learners in essay writing

Based on the analysis of the tertiary learners in their essay writing showed that they cannot able yet to make an essay based on the rhetorically approach. It can be seen in the following table.

Table 1
Analysis of the tertiary learners in essay writing

No	Total Students	Writing Essay Based on Rhetorically Approach					
		Introduction		Body of Paragraph		Conclusion	
		Able	Unable	Able	Unable	Able	Unable
1	45	√		√		√	
2	20	√			√		√

3	16	√	√	√
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The data above shows that there are still the tertiary learners not able yet to make an essay that consisted of introduction, body of paragraph and conclusion based on rhetorically approach. The table above also shows that a half of the sample have been able to make introduction by writing an interesting thesis statement and make the readers interest to their writing. By seeing it, it can catch the reader to read the essay till the end. They were also able to make the body of paragraph based on the thesis statement. It meant that they were able to describe the thesis statement in some paragraph by writing the main idea and explaining by supporting sentences well. It can be concluded they are able to developing and organizing the idea well (Jing, 2017; Pratiwi, 2016). And the last, the tertiary learners were also able to summarize their essay writing well. They were able to conclude the core of their essay writing. For this characteristic, the researcher symbolized as the *Category I* to make easy the researcher and reader getting the message. Besides that, some tertiary learners were able to write the thesis statement that catch the readers' attention but they could not able to explain the thesis statement in body paragraph. It meant that they were not able to support the thesis statement by writing the main idea, developing and organizing the idea well and directly they cannot able to summarize the core of their writing in conclusion. And the researcher gave the symbol as the *Category II*. The last, the researcher also found that some tertiary learners were not able to write the thesis statement and it caused the result of their essay writing is not satisfied and not based on rhetorically approach. It meant that they are not able to write the topic that wanted to be described. If they were not able to write the thesis statement, directly they cannot able to write and describe the body of paragraph. Because the core of essay puts on the thesis statement and it becomes the road map in writing essay. Then, the researcher marked this case as the *Category III* (Nevolina et al., 2021; Ha, 2021).

It can be summarized that there are forty-five tertiary learners were categorized as the *Category I*. Then, there are twenty tertiary learners were categorized as the *Category II* and sixteen tertiary learners were categorized as *category III*. The percentage of structure of tertiary learners' essay writing can be figured as following.

Table 2
Percentage of structure of tertiary learners' essay writing

No	Type of Category	Percentage of Structure of Essay Writing Based on Rhetorically Approach (%)
1	Category I	55,56 %
2	Category II	24,69 %
3	Category II	19, 75 %

The table above showed that over all the tertiary learners were not able yet to write an essay based on structure of essay by using rhetorically approach. It is supported that only 55,56 % tertiary learners are able to write an essay based on rhetorical approach. From the result of this study, it is needed to implement or apply a teaching method or teaching technique in essay writing. By applying

treatment an appropriate method or technique in teaching writing, outlook can improve tertiary learners in writing an essay (Hovers & Vynkovicz-Mytel, 2020; Suwija et al., 2019).

The tertiary learners' difficulties in essay writing

Based on investigating and examining to the tertiary learners' essay writing, the researcher found some difficulties in (1) Grammar. In this case the tertiary learners could not able to use the tense well, as the example when the tertiary learner told about the past time, the do not used the past participle verb in the sentence. That's wrong. Because verb has necessary role in sentence. By seeing the verbs, the reader will know about the event whether it happens in the past time or not. In the other hand, verb also decides the role in sentence to decide the meaning of the sentence. (2) Vocabulary. It is the second difficulties of the tertiary learners in writing an essay. Here, they do not have enough vocabulary, so they can build the sentence completely. In the other hand, they do not use the appropriate word in arranging the sentence. (3) Cohesion and coherence, (4) Misspelling. It is one of the problem and difficulties of tertiary learners in writing an essay. Misspelling words can be represented as a series of letter that put or written correctly in written form. As the example, the word "teacher". Some tertiary learners wrote with "taecher", techer" and etc. In this case, they are wrong to put the letter and it often is found in tertiary students' essay writing. (5) developing and organizing idea. Here they cannot able to build sentences such as developing and organizing idea in body of paragraph. (6) Arranging or building sentences are still based on first language (L1).

Conclusion

Based on the finding of the research that forty-five tertiary learners are able to write an essay based on rhetorically approach. It can be seen from the structure of their essay writing, namely introduction, body of paragraph and conclusion. They are able to build a good and interesting thesis statement. So, it can attract the readers to read the essay writing. In other hand, they are able to develop and organize the main idea and making conclusion clearly. Then, the tertiary learners also undergo problem and difficulties in writing essay, such as grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence, misspelling and developing and organizing idea. So, based on the finding, it is needed to create a method or technique that can be conducted in teaching learning process, especially in teaching essay writing. By using the appropriate method or technique, it is hoped the tertiary learners' essay writing will improve.

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