

Analysis of Students' Ability in Writing a Research Proposal

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Abstract: This research is based on the needs to investigate the students' ability in writing a research proposal for the fourth year students at English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning. This research aims at analyzing the students' ability of the fourth year students at English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning in writing a research proposal. The method employed in this research is qualitative method with survey research design. The total number of population in this research were 132 students. The sample elected were 20 students. Based on the data which have been collected and analyzed, it were found that the students' ability in writing a research proposal categorized into "middle". The average score achieved was 67.1. It was categorized into middle. Based on the research finding above, it can be concluded that the students' ability in writing a research proposal is categorized into middle. This result is in line with the analysis of writing a research proposal using scoring rubric available in this research.

Keywords: Analysis, Writing skill, Research proposal, Scoring rubric.

1. Introduction

Basically, writing is an activity of expressing, elaborating, and organizing ideas in a written form. It will be better if the writers have many ideas to be written as a composition. The more ideas the writers have, the easier the writers write a composition. However, in order to be able to express, elaborate, and organize ideas is not an easy thing. There are some aspects which should be considered by the writers before writing a composition.

First, writing process should be considered by the writers. This is because the writing process can help writers in organizing their composition in a good order. According to Harmer (2004:5), Hyland (2003:11), Seow (in Richards and Renandya, 2002:315), and Fachrurrazy (2011:90) state that writing process covering *prewriting*, *drafting*, *revising*, *editing*, and *publishing*. Second, microskill and macroskill of writing should also be considered by the writers. Brown (2007:399) explains that *microskill* and *macroskill* in writing cover the abilities of using correct diction, grammar, and writing mechanics such as; capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. One of composition focused in this research is a research proposal.

Research proposal is a scientific writing written by university students to accomplish their study. In writing a research proposal, the students should refer to thesis proposal guideline made by team writers from the faculty. The students from Faculty of Teachers Training and Education should used thesis proposal guideline from that faculty.

From the explanation above, the writer interested to conduct a research focusing on analyzing the students' ability in writing a research proposal as well as finding how far their ability in writing a research proposal.

1.1 Research Question

Based on the background of the research above, the research question can be formulated as follows: How is the students' ability in writing a research proposal written by the students at the fourth year of English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning?

1.2 Objective of the Research

This research aims at analyzing the students' ability in writing a research proposal at the fourth year of English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning.

1.3 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to be useful especially for lecturers, students, and researchers and future researchers.

1. The lecturer knew the students' ability in writing a research proposal that can be used as an evaluation of teaching and learning process.
2. The students got a reflection on their writing achievement.
3. The researcher can apply and improve the knowledge about research.
4. The future researchers can use the references used in this research to conduct further research.

2. Theoretical Basis

2.1 Guideline for thesis writing

Research proposal is a scientific writing in the form of proposal draft which has been arranged. There are some aspects that can be considered in writing a research proposal such as; research proposal should be written at HVS or A4 paper, writing format uses Times New Roman, and the Font should be 12.

The explanation of writing guideline of thesis proposal can be divided into three aspects; writing format, consistency, and content.

Writing format

Naturally, there are many formats of writing a research proposal. Cunningham (2004) state that format of writing a research proposal for final assignment is not far different from one and another universities. The arrangement of writing format of research formal proposed by Cunningham are as follow:

- Cover
- Abstract
- Acknowledgement
- Table of Content
- Literature Review
- Content and Method
- Findings
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Appendices
- References

However, Shrestha (2004) state different format from Cunningham. The format proposed by Shrestha are as follow:

- Cover
- Abstract
- Acknowledgement
- Table of Content
- Chapter I Introduction
- Chapter II Literature Review
- Chapter III Research Method
- Chapter IV Findings and Discussion
- Chapter V Conclusion and Suggestion
- References
- Appendices

From the above explanation, the researcher tend to use the format proposed by Shrestha (2004) as a guideline in writing a research proposal. This is because this format is in line with the format written by team writers in English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning.

2.1.2 Consistency

In this aspect, it can be checked whether or not the students consistent in writing a research proposal such as; the use of language style whether British or American style, citation, and writing mechanics; spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

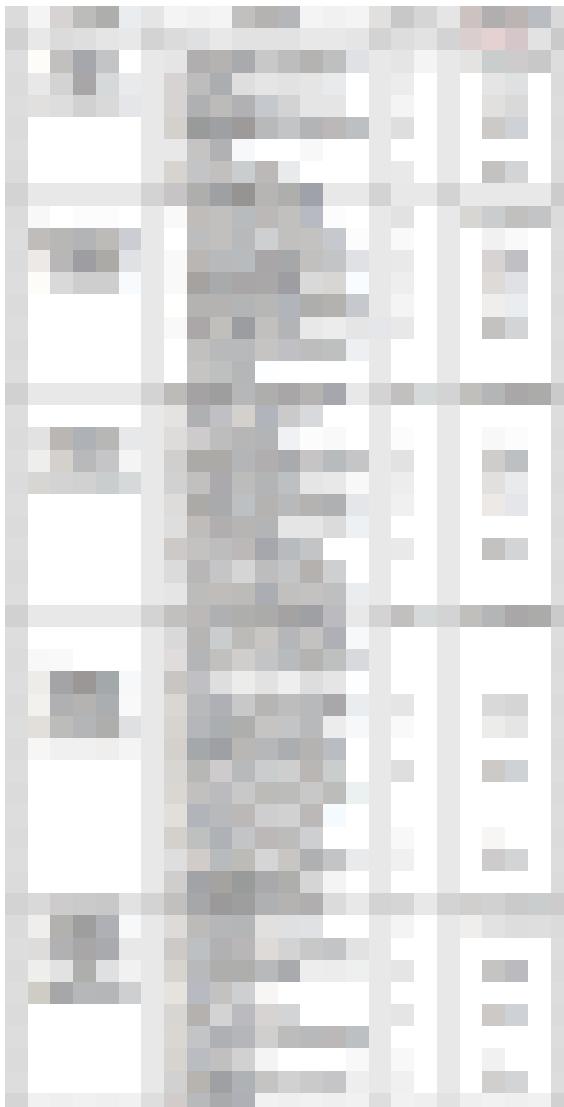
2.1.3 Content

This part focusing on the match of content with every single element in a research proposal, for example; background, research question, objective of the research for Classroom Action Research design should match with that research design, not experimental or survey research design.

2.2 Assessment of writing a research proposal

All aspects considered in writing a research proposal are assessed based on writing indicators such as; *content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics*. The further information of this assessment can be seen in the Table below.

Table 2.1 Scoring Rubric for Writing Assessment of a Research Proposal





Adapted from Jacob, et al's (in Hughes, 2003:104), Brown (2004:246), and Henning (1987:150)

Moreover, the students' scores calculated and analyzed using the above rubric are categorized as stated in the Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Final Scores Category

Range of Final Scores	Categories
86 – 100	Very Good
71 – 85	Good
56 – 70	Fair
10 – 55	Poor

Adapted from Leo (in Abbas, 2013:21)

From the Table 2.2 above, it can be explained that the students who got the score 86-100 is categorized into "very good", 71-85 is categorized into "good", 56-70 is categorized into "fair", and 10-55 is categorized into "poor."

3. Methodology

The method employed in this research was qualitative method. The design of this research was survey. The setting of this research was at English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning. The population of this research were 132 students. Moreover, the detail information about population of this research can be seen at Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Population of the Research

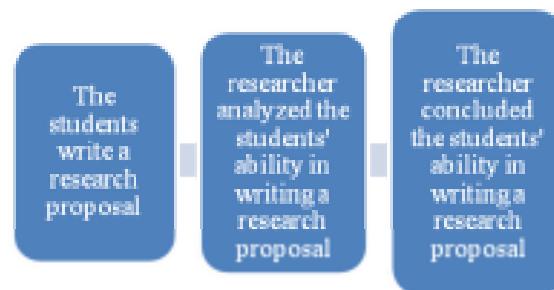
No	Grade	Population
1	VII A	27
2	VII B	33
3	VII C	21
4	VII D	23
5	VII E	28
Total		132 students

From the total of population above, the researcher took 20 sample as representative of population. According to Arikunto (2010:134), if total population more than 100, the sample can be elected 10-15 % or 20-25% or more than that. In addition, the sampling technique used in this research referred to Sugiyono (2011:118) by using *simple random sampling*. This technique focused on how to take sample randomly without looking at the strata or students level of

ability. Moreover, the procedures used in this research are as follow.

1. The students were asked to write a research proposal.
2. The researcher analyzed the students' ability in writing a research proposal.
3. The researcher concluded the students' ability in writing a research proposal.

Figure 3.1 The Research Procedures



In addition, the technique of collecting data in this research is documentation technique in the form of research proposal archieves written by the students at the fourth year of English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education University of Lancang Kuning. Moreover, the technique of analyzing data used in this research is by using scoring rubric for writing a research proposal assessment available in this research.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

In accordance with the data gained in this research, it can be stated that the students' ability in writing a research proposal was categorized into "fair". It was because all writing components in a research proposal which has been assessed by using scoring rubric were also categorized into fair.

4.2 Discussion

In relation to the research findings above, it can be explained that most students got scores which was categorized into fair. From 20 samples elected, there were 5 students got 75 and it was categorized into "good", 6 students got 67.5 (fair), 9 students got 62.5 (fair). Moreover, the average score was 67.1 and it was categorized into "fair". Therefore, the students' ability in writing a research proposal was categorized into fair.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the research findings obtained from this research, it can be concluded that the students' ability in writing a research proposal was categorized into "fair". This is in line with the analysis of writing ability by using scoring rubric for writing a research proposal assessment.

5.2 Suggestion

From the findings of the research, there are some suggestion addressed especially for:

a. Lecturer

The lecturers who teach *writing* and *research methodology* course are suggested to give an extra exercise. As a result, the students weaknesses in writing a research proposal can be avoided.

b. Students

The students are suggested to learn more about research methodology and practice how to write a good research proposal.

c. Future researchers

The future researchers can use the references or the result of this research to conduct further research.

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