

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Genre analysis is defined as an area in discourse analysis that studies mainly non-literary communication in relation to its situational context (academic setting, legal setting, commercial setting, etc.) using the approach of genre, that is, by realizing types or kinds of the discourse (Garzone, 2015 in International Encyclopedia of Communication). Genre analysis studies have been flourishing in the last few decades especially under the umbrella of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Kobayashi, 2003; Duszak, 1997; McMahon, 2013).

The focus of analyses in such field has mostly been centered around how academic writers rhetorically convince their readers to accept the writers' claims and arguments for the research projects in one or more sections of the research articles (RAs), namely: introduction, methodology, results, discussion, etc. The term "rhetoric" itself is generally understood as the art of discourse in which a writer (or speaker) aims not only to inform, but also to persuade and influence particular audiences in specific settings (Conley, 1994).

Past studies in genre analysis have found that there are indeed varying strategies used by academic writers to gain their readers' acceptance, specifically in regards to rhetorical moves and how those moves are organized in the texts. Despite the variation in strategy, it has also been acknowledged that writers who belong to same discourse communities possess similar writing styles or conventions. Such as, the writing styles of native English group (Swales, 1990; 2004), writing styles of native Polish group (Duszak, 1994; 1997), writing styles

of native Malay group (Ahmad, 1997) or writing styles of native Indonesian group (Safnil, 2000; Mirahayuni, 2002; Adnan, 2009).

The booming interest that is shown through the rapidly increasing number of studies and researches in genre analysis on academic writing in the past few decades cannot be separated from the influence of Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model that is proposed by Swales (1990). This model is aimed at describing and explaining the rhetorical structures of research article introductions (RAIs) that belong to native English academic writers.

This model has been globally acknowledged and highly influential amongst the scholars for its clarity and applicability. Hyon (2018, p. 23) even states, “It is hard to overstate the influence of Swales’ genre theorizing, re-theorizing, and analyses on ESP genre research and teaching”. The academic writers can utilize this model as a guidance to compose good research paper introductions in English language that can compete well in international platforms.

Despite its popularity, the model has been revised by Swales (2004) after considering some criticisms and suggestions by other scholars such as Chu (1996) Anthony (1999), Lewin et al. (2001) and Samraj (2002). The revised version is well-known as the “amended CARS model” and is declared as flexible enough to be applied on introductions of various cultures (languages) and scientific fields.

Accordingly, significant numbers of the studies have been revolved around scholar-produced genres, especially RAIs, as stated by Yayli and Canagarajah (2014). Samraj (2008) argues that there has not been as much studies conducted on student-produced genres, such as PhD thesis introductions (Bunton, 2002;

Swales, 2004; Cheung, 2012) and master thesis introductions (Samraj, 2008; Ketabi & Rahavard, 2013).

Thus Samraj (2008), in order to properly describe and explain the rhetorical moves found in introductions made by students at graduate level, has modified the CARS model by adapting some of the original steps. This modified version has been applied successfully in other researches (Cheung, 2012; Ketabi & Rahavard, 2013). However, so far, there has been very limited number of studies that utilizes this modification to observe another important student-produced genre, namely the undergraduate thesis introductions. Thus, it becomes theoretical consideration in the current research.

Moreover, there is another consideration that is a practical concern due to an actual problem found in the real world setting. In Jambi University, there is an undergraduate study program that obligates its students to write their theses in English language, which is, English Education Study Program in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. Near the end of their study period, the students have to write a thesis that contains an introduction.

But, according to a phenomenology study that has been conducted by Wahyuni (2016), some students of English Education Study Program in Jambi University found difficulties in writing the introduction section of their undergraduate thesis. One student even admitted that the hardest part in introduction was to elaborate a clear research background, as stated here:

“For the introduction the most difficult in introduction is bringing up the background of study cause it’s really hard to relate the problem or the what issue that what in thesis to become our thesis statement for prove the thesis is really can do it.” [Syifa] (Wahyuni, 2016, p. 42)

Moreover, even some participants who considered their English proficiency as fair, found difficulties in expressing and connecting the ideas they had in mind. Wahyuni (p. 40-41) argues that such difficulties have become an issue in academic writing ability. According to Swales and Feak (1994), introduction is difficult to write because it contains two purposes, which are, to inform the readers about research topic's importance and to persuade the readers to continue reading the whole introduction and rest of the paper. These goals have to be achieved through considerable length of text. So, the writers have to be clear, persuasive and brief at the same time which makes it even more difficult to write.

Studies by Swales and Feak (1994) and Wahyuni (2016) prove that rhetoric is an important skill besides grammar and vocabulary for students in the pedagogy of academic writing. It is important for academic writers to understand what kind of rhetorical strategies are preferable for their specific readers, especially in terms of thesis introduction writing. Thus, genre analysis is a beneficial tool to achieve such purpose. Through genre analysis, a writer will be able to see what rhetorical moves should occur in their introductions and how those moves should be organized, according to their readers' preferences.

Therefore, the current research intends to analyze what rhetorical moves occur in undergraduate thesis introductions in English Education Study Program at Jambi University, using the modified version of CARS model by Samraj. This research also intends to analyze how the moves are organized in the introductions. The research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits for the members of discourse community in English Education Study Program at Jambi University.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

There are two questions that can be formulated based on background of the research that has been described. These questions are:

- 1) What rhetorical moves do occur in undergraduate thesis introductions in English Education Study Program at Jambi University, according to the modified version of CARS model by Samraj?
- 2) How do English Education Study Program students at Jambi University organize their thesis introductions in terms of rhetorical moves order?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

There are two objectives in this research. First objective is to describe and explain various rhetorical moves that occur in undergraduate thesis introductions written by English Education Study Program students in Jambi University. The second objective is to describe and explain how the students organize those moves in their introductions in the form of moves order.

## **1.4 Research Limitations**

The current research is focused solely on the introduction sections of undergraduate thesis written by English Education Study Program students in Jambi University. Moreover, this research is situated under qualitative design using moves analysis approach in order to describe and explain the occurrence of rhetorical moves, their following steps and their order in the texts.

The main model that is used as the analysis tool is the taxonomy by Samraj (2008). Furthermore, the theses selected are those that have been officially accepted by Jambi University and published to online repository of Faculty of

Teacher Training and Education (i.e. E-Campus) in the form of digital files in the first trimester of 2018.

### **1.5 Research Significances**

The findings of this research are expected to provide some beneficial inputs for related institutions in which this research is conducted for the purpose of betterment of undergraduate students' competence in academic writing in general and thesis writing in specific, so that they may compete better with fellow students in both national and international platforms.

The findings of this research are also expected to provide useful insights for students, lecturers and educators in the classroom setting for pedagogical purposes especially in regards to various genres of academic writing. The researcher also hopes that this research could serve as a motivational reference for novice writers and researchers who want to further acknowledge and polish their rhetorical skills and strategies in academic writing subject.

### **1.6 Definitions of Key Terms**

**Genre** can be defined as a staged and structured communicative event that is motivated by various purposes and it is performed by particular discourse communities (Swales, 1990, 2004 in McMahan, 2013).

**Genre analysis** is understood as a socially ratified way of using language in connection with particular social activity (Fairclough, 1995, p. 14).

**Rhetorics** is generally understood as the art of discourse in which a writer (or speaker) aims not only to inform, but also to persuade and influence particular audiences in specific settings (Conley, 1994)

**Undergraduate thesis** is defined as a scientific research paper that is written by undergraduate student who has accomplished at least 135 academic credits, under supervision by one lecturer as the main advisor and one lecturer as the advisor, as a partial fulfilment in obtaining bachelor degree (FKIP Universitas Jambi).