



Exploring EFL Students Perception on the Advantages of Attending Research Proposal Seminars

Eliza Trianasari¹, M.Affandi Arianto¹

¹ English Department, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang

Correspondence Email: elizatrianasari1109@gmail.com

Volume 15, Number 1, 2026, 268-278

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24036/z4dghz89>

Abstract:

Students of the English Language Education Study Program often attend research proposal seminars, but do not fully understand the benefits of these activities on the development of their academic language skills. This study aims to explore students' perception on the advantages of attending research proposal seminars reviewed from three aspects, namely cognitive, affective, and conative. This study uses a qualitative approach with phenomenological design that focuses on students' direct experience in attending proposal seminars. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with six informants selected by purposive sampling. The results of the study show that from a cognitive aspect, students become more aware of the importance of English skills such as listening, vocabulary, and grammar in understanding academic presentations. From the affective aspect, students experience greater motivation to learn academic English and understand research proposal structures, increased confidence in speaking English in public, and more positive attitude toward the English learning process. Meanwhile, from the conative aspect, students demonstrate clear behavioral intentions, such as preparing for their own research proposals, developing presentation skills, and actively participating in proposal seminars. Overall, the results of this study reveal that attending the proposal seminar provides a meaningful experience that contributes to the development of students' academic English skills and student readiness to engage in academic activities within the context of English language learning.

Keywords:

EFL Students, Student Perception, Proposal Seminar

© The Author(s). Published by Universitas Negeri Padang. This is an open-access article under the Creative Commons License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

English language teaching involves the integration of four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing, along with essential language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These elements are interrelated and contribute to students' communicative competence. Therefore, English language education departments focus on providing opportunities for students to develop these competencies through formal

instruction and authentic academic experiences. One of the important academic experiences in higher education is research proposal seminars, an academic forum where students present their research plan. The research proposal seminar is an important step in a final year student's journey toward graduation (Ardiana, 2022). The proposal seminar is part of the advanced stage in which students present their thesis plan (Pradikto, 2023).

Based on the background of the study, several problems can be identified regarding students' participation in research proposal seminars. Although proposal seminars are designed as valuable academic learning opportunities, many students tend to treat them as mere formal requirements. Some students attend only to complete attendance obligations and collect signatures on seminar cards, without actively engaging or paying attention to the content being presented.

Proposal seminars are primarily intended to assess students' readiness for conducting research; they also have the potential to function as learning environments for both presenters and audiences. According to Juniasari (2024), the examiners listen to the students' presentations as they explain the research they plan to conduct. Based on Annisa et al (2022), examiners and supervisors are invited to listen to the students' explanation of the planned research. During the proposal seminar, the reviewers listen to students' presentations as they explain the research they intend to conduct. In the proposal seminar, lectures also guide students to refine and improve their research plan. In the question and answer session that follows, the audience has the opportunity to ask questions about the presentation and the content of the proposal.

The research proposal seminar can be viewed as an authentic context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), where students use English for academic communication such as presenting, asking, answering, and discussing research content. According to Hyland (2006), EAP focuses on developing learners' abilities to use English effectively in academic settings, while Flowerdew & Peacock (2001) emphasize that EAP integrates linguistic competence with academic discourse awareness. Therefore, attending proposal seminars can serve as an opportunity for students to observe and practice the use of academic English in real communication contexts. In the English Language Teaching, proposal seminars provide authentic context that support the development of language skills and components. Students can indirectly improve listening comprehension by following the presentation, enhance vocabulary by learning new academic terms, strengthen grammar awareness through examples of academic course, and develop speaking skills when engaging in discussions. In addition, proposal seminars also may affect students' affective domains, such as motivation, confidence, and attitude toward learning English.

In the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang, attending proposal seminars is a mandatory requirement before presenting one's own research proposal. Students must attend at least ten seminars as audience members to familiarize themselves with the seminar process and academic expectations. However, preliminary observations show that not all students attend these seminars with active engagement. Some attend merely to obtain attendance signatures, while others participate actively to gain knowledge, improve academic English, and prepare for their own seminars. Based on a brief interview conducted by the researcher, students expressed varying reasons for their attendance. Some mentioned that they joined the seminar because they found it necessary, thought to expand their knowledge, and wanted to prepare themselves for their own proposal seminar. Among the many English Department students at Universitas Negeri Padang, only a few regularly attended the English proposal seminars. Some other students

attend proposal seminar only as a formality to obtain a signature on their seminar attendance card.

In this study, the researchers aims to explore students perception based on Walgito's theory students perception have three aspect there are cognitive, affective and conative. Therefore, it is important to investigate explore how students perception on attending research proposal seminars focusing on how this experience contributes to their English Language Learning in terms of skills and components. The focus is on the students perception based three aspect cognitive, affective, and conative. From cognitive aspect, students may improve their knowledge, academic process, to develop deeper understanding how to conduct the research. Affective aspect, related to students feelings, attitude when attending research proposal seminar. Then conative aspect related to students action, or what student do after attending research proposal seminar. So that, the researchers find out how students perception on the advantages of attending research proposal seminars.

2. METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, as it aimed to explore students' lived experiences in attending research proposal seminars. The participants of this study were six students from the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang, who were selected through purposive sampling. All participants had attended at least five proposal seminars and were willing to share their experiences openly. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted in Indonesian to ensure clarity and comfort during the discussion. In this study, the researcher served as the key instrument and used an interview guide developed based on Walgito's (2010) three components of perception: cognitive, affective, and conative. The collected data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (2019) model, which consists of three main steps: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Through these stages, the researcher selected, simplified, and organized the interview data, then interpreted and summarized the findings to identify the main themes related to students' perception on the advantages of attending research proposal seminars.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Finding

In this study, the researcher describes the result of students' perception on the advantages of attending research proposal seminars, analyzed through three aspect cognitive, affective, and conative. The findings of this study are based on interviews with six English Language Education Students at Universitas Negeri Padang.

Cognitive Aspect

Students demonstrated strong awareness of the importance of English language skills such as listening, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in understanding seminar content. They found that attending proposal seminars helped them observe how academic English is used in real communication contexts. Through these experiences, students learned how to organize ideas, respond to questions, and use formal language during academic discussions.

“ Listening skill very important because as an audience, I have to pay attention carefully to understand the presenter's explanation “ (Informant 1).

*“ **Listening help me understand** what lectures and speakers are explaining, especially when supported by sufficient vocabulary knowledge “ (Informant 2).*

*“In my opinion, attending proposal seminars **gives me the opportunity to directly practice using appropriate academic English** because it’s a formal academic setting” (Informant 4).*

Affective Aspect

Attending proposal seminars also had a positive impact on students’ affective domains. Most participants reported that they felt more motivated and confident after observing their classmates’ presentations. They became inspired to improve their English skills and to participate more actively in discussions. Moreover, they developed a positive attitude toward learning English because they recognized that seminars provide authentic exposure to academic English communication.

*“I feel more confident because I see my classmates using English appropriately in an academic context. **That really affects my confidence and helps me improve my speaking ability, not only my confidence but also my skill in public speaking**” (Informant 3).*

*“I think confidence depends a lot on the environment and the people in it. For me, **being confident really helps when I want to ask questions about things I need to know**” (Informant 4)*

*“It really boosts my confidence. Before, I was afraid to speak or ask questions, **but after attending several seminars, I became braver. Seeing my friends speak in English helps me realize that I can do it too**” (Informant 5).*

Conative Aspect

From the conative aspect, students showed real behavioral changes after attending seminars. They began taking notes on lecturers’ feedback, applying the suggestions to their own thesis writing, and preparing themselves better for future presentations. Many of them also became more active in asking questions and sharing opinions during discussions, which indicates a growing engagement in academic communication.

*“**I usually take notes during other students’ proposal seminars and relate them to my own proposal.** I also consult with my supervisor about what I observed and prepare the necessary tools or instruments for my thesis based on those observations” (Informant 2).*

*“When I attend proposal seminars, **I often take notes from other students’ theses and review them later.** This helps me prepare for my own thesis presentation” (Informant 3).*

Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis. It was found that there were three main aspect students' perception on the advantages of attending research proposal. They are: **Cognitive Aspect** (Students Awareness of ELT skills, and Understanding of Academic English), **Affective Aspect** (Students Motivation to Academic English and Research Proposal Structure, Confidence in Speaking English in Public, and Attitude Toward English Learning Process), **Conative Aspect** (Behavioral Intention in Preparing Their Own Research, Developing Presentation Skills, Active Participation in Attending Research Proposal Seminars).

Cognitive Aspect

Awareness of English Skills and Components

Students showed strong awareness of the importance of English language skills and components particularly listening, reading, vocabulary and pronunciation in understanding the content of proposal seminars. Listening was highlighted as the most crucial skill, allowing them to follow presentations and feedback accurately. Reading helped them understand thesis materials, while vocabulary and pronunciation supported comprehension and proper communication. This findings supports Huda et al (2020), who emphasize that language awareness is the explicit knowledge about language and its use. They explain that being aware of language helps learners focus, increases sensitivity to proper language use, and enhances motivation to improve their language skills.

Understanding of Academic English

Through attending proposal seminars, students received real exposure to academic English usage, which allowed them to observe how formal language is applied in authentic contexts. They became more familiar with academic vocabulary, sentence structure, and discourse patterns used in academic settings. This findings aligns with Krashen (1982) input hypothesis, which suggests that language acquisition occurs effectively when learners are exposed to meaningful and comprehensible input. Proposal seminars thus provide rich linguistic input that enhances students awareness and understanding of English in academic communication. This findings also support with Ulandari (2025), speaking competence in academic contexts not only demands the ability to convey ideas or arguments clearly and logically, but also includes participating in class discussions, presentations, seminars, and other academic interactions.

Affective Aspect

Motivation to Academic English and Research proposal structure

Motivation was strengthened as students observed their peers asking questions and delivering comments fluently in English. This observation created an internal drive to improve their own proficiency and participation. Based on Ushioda (2011), motivation in language learning is closely related to learners self concept and social experiences. Observing peers successfully using English can enhance learners intrinsic motivation, as they are inspired to imitate effective behaviors. Furthermore, students also were motivated to pay attention to the detail structure of thesis proposals during seminars. Observing how lecturers and peers highlighted elements such as background, research objectives, and methodology encouraged students to avoid mistakes and improve their own academic

writing. The similarity of this finding with another research findings about attending the conference has helped someone learn about the challenges and successes in making proposals and research (Meta et al, 2016).

Confidence in speaking English in Public

Based on this findings, many students felt anxious or hesitant to speak in public, but as they attended more seminars, they gained courage and began to ask questions or express opinions using English. This findings in line with Ajzen & Fishbein, (1991), which posits that attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and motivation shape individuals intentions and actions. When students perceive that they are capable and supported their intention to act such as speaking up in academic English becomes stronger.

Attitude Toward English Learning Process

Students developed a more positive attitude toward English learning, viewing proposal seminars as a valuable learning medium rather than merely an academic requirement. They appreciated the seminars as opportunities to observe authentic academic communication and to directly apply English skills in real academic contexts. This affective engagement fosters persistence, curiosity, and enthusiasm for continued language development. This emphasize that attending proposal seminars help students develop a positive attitude toward learning and improve their critical thinking. This supports with Purba (1996), critical and positive thinking grows when students engage deeply with the issues, analyze material carefully, and consider others opinions based on scientific evidence. In this study, students said that observing peers, receiving feedback from lecturers, and reflecting on their own work helped them apply these skills, showing responsible and scientific approach in preparing their thesis.

Conative Aspect

Behavioral Intention in Preparing Their Own Research

The conative aspect reflects the students intentions and actions in applying what they have learned from proposal seminars into their own academic practices. The findings show that students actively used their experiences as preparation for their future thesis writing and presentations. They learned from presenters performances, lecturers feedback, and peers discussions to improve their own academic English skills. This findings similar with Pradikto (2023), attending proposal seminars felt encouraged to share ideas and learn from others, and believe that questions and feedback after the seminar were very informative. This indicates that proposal seminars can enhances students intentions to apply what they have learned in their academic practice.

Developing Presentation Skills

Proposal Seminars They learn how to express arguments, ask and respond to questions, and use formal English in an academic context. Observing the “do’s and don’ts” of presentation also improves their strategic competence. According to Krashen’s (1982) theory, such meaningful, context rich interactions facilitate the natural acquisition of language because they combine both input and output opportunities. This findings align with Juniasari (2024), some proposal presentations makes the informant motivated to improving the presentations skills by watching presenter present a proposal, the informant knows how

to improve students public speaking. The similar research about students experiences on their thesis proposal seminar before seminar, students prepare their presentations slides and plan how to deliver their proposal effectively which includes mastering the material content, understanding the context, organizing the general structure of the proposal, and paying attention to use the appropriate language and presentation performance (Pradikto, 2023).

Active Participation in Attending Research Proposal Seminar

As reported by all participants, further contributes to their cognitive and linguistic development. By listening attentively, taking notes, and interacting with presenters, students not only improve their English skills but also their critical thinking, focus, and professionalism. These findings confirm that active learning environments like proposal seminars foster autonomy and self regulated learning behaviors. This findings align with Vygotsky (1978), which emphasizes that learning occurs most effectively through social interaction and active participation. Active participation in proposal seminars as a key factors in enhancing students academic and linguistics competence. The similar study based on Pradikto (2023), revealed that active participation before, during, and after the seminar helped the students improve their confidence, idea organization, and understanding of academic English. Most participants agreed that proposal seminars encourage sharing ideas, developing communication skills, and learning from peer and lecturer feedback.

English for Academic Purposes in Proposal Seminars

This study's findings can be further interpreted through key theories of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which emphasize the use of English in authentic academic contexts. Proposal seminars align closely with EAP principles because they require students to engage in academic speaking, critical thinking, and disciplinary discourse.

Hyland (2006) defines EAP as a field that focuses on the specific language features and communicative practices required in academic settings. From this perspective, proposal seminars function as academic discourse events where students are expected to present arguments, justify research decisions, and respond to critical questions using appropriate academic language.

Jordan (1997) emphasizes that EAP involves not only written skills but also oral academic communication, such as presentations, discussions, and seminars. Proposal seminars provide an authentic context for developing these skills, particularly in EFL settings where exposure to academic English is limited. Carless (2007) introduces the concept of assessment as learning, suggesting that assessment activities can function as learning opportunities when students actively engage with feedback. Proposal seminars embody this principle, as examiner feedback helps students refine both their research and their academic English.

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the participants involved in this research were limited in number and background. All participants were female students, and no male students were included. As a result, the findings may not fully represent gender based differences in students' perceptions and experiences of proposal seminar assessment. The absence of male participants may limit the generalizability of the findings across genders.

Second, the participants in this study were drawn solely from one academic year,

namely BP21. Students from other year, such as BP19 or BP20, were not included. Therefore, the findings reflect the experiences and perceptions of students from a single academic year and may not capture variations in experiences across different academic years or stages of study.

Third, this study employed a phenomenological design, which focuses on exploring participants' lived experiences in depth rather than producing generalizable results. Consequently, the findings are context specific and cannot be generalized to all EFL students or institutions. Instead, the results provide rich and detailed insights into the phenomenon as experienced by the selected participants. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into how EFL students perceive and experience proposal seminar assessment as an EAP learning context. Future research is recommended to involve participants from diverse genders and academic cohorts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions presented in the previous chapter, this study concludes that attending proposal seminars provides substantial benefits for students' English language development, especially for those in the English Language Education Study Program. The advantages can be categorized into three main aspects: cognitive, affective, and conative.

From the cognitive aspect, students became more aware of the importance of English language skills and components such as listening, reading, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in understanding proposal presentations. The seminars served as an authentic platform for students to observe and learn how English is used in academic settings, helping them enhance their knowledge and comprehension of academic English.

The affective aspect, attending proposal seminars increased students' motivation, confidence, and positive attitudes toward learning English. They felt inspired by their peers who could actively participate using academic English and were encouraged to improve their own communication skills. Regular exposure to academic discussions also reduced their anxiety and built their confidence to speak in front of others using English.

The last conative aspect, proposal seminars shaped students' behavioral intentions and actions. They became more active participants listening attentively, taking notes, asking questions, and providing feedback. Students also learned presentation strategies, such as how to organize points clearly and use appropriate academic expressions. This active involvement not only improved their academic English skills but also prepared them for future thesis defenses and academic presentations. In conclusion, proposal seminars play a vital role as an effective learning medium that integrates language learning, academic practice, and personal development. The seminars provide meaningful exposure, authentic interaction, and opportunities for students to apply their English skills in real academic contexts, making them more confident, motivated, and capable learners.

REFERENCES

- Agarina, M. (2019). Sistem informasi dan telematika, *Jurnal sistem informasi*. 10(1), 1- 10
- Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (2005). *The Influence of Attitudes on Behavior*. In D. Albarracin, B.T. Johnson, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *The Handbook of Attitudes* (173- 221). Mahwah, NJ Erlbaum. Scientific Research Publishing
- Al'Adawi, S. S. A. (2017). Exploring the effectiveness of implementing seminars as a teaching and an assessment method in a children's literature course. *Journal English Language Teaching*, 10(11), 1–12. DOI <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n11p1>
- Annisa Jam, S., Amin, B., & Amaliah, N. (2022). Investigating students' anxiety in conducting proposal seminar at English Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. *Indonesian Journal of Psycholinguistics*, 1(1), 71–89. DOI <https://doi.org/10.22219/jpbi.vxiy.xxyy>
- Arribathi, A. H., Studi, P., Informasi, S., Raharja, U., Teknik, P. S., & Raharja, I. U. (2019). Perancangan aplikasi. *Journal Teknologi Informasi dan komputer*, 5(2), 156–164.
- Aurianza, R. (2021). *Students' perception toward online seminar proposal during pandemic Covid-19*: Unpublished Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. Pearson Education.
- Carless, D. (2007). Learning Oriented Assessment: Conceptual Bases and Practical Implications. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 44(1), 57–66.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Derso, M. C. (2019). Undergraduate scientific paper academic research proposal, research, senior seminar, and practical attachment report writing guidelines. *Academic Research Journal of Biotechnology*. <https://doi.org/10.14662/ARJ> B2019.015
- Flowerdew, J., & Peacock, M. (2001). *Research Perspectives on English For Academic Purposes*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gay, L. R., & Mills, G. E. (2019). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application* (12th ed.). Pearson.
- George, E. (2022). *10 Benefits of Attending Academic Conferences*. Researcher Life.
- Hauss, K. (2023). *Benefits Of Attending Academic Conferences*. Oxford Scholastica Academy. <https://www.oxfordscholastica.com/blog/why-attend-conferences>.
- Huda, F. (2020). Students' awareness of language use and language knowledge on EFL learners. *Journal of English Education*, 5(2), 95–103. DOI <https://doi.org/10.31327/jee.v5i2.1284>
- Hyland, K., & Shaw, P. (Eds.). (2006). *The Routledge Handbook of English for Academic Purposes*. Routledge. DOI <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315657455>
- Jaya, S., & Oktavia, N. (2022). A study of anxiety experienced by EFL students in presenting proposal seminars at English Study Program Muhammadiyah University of

- Bengkulu. *Teaching English and Language Learning English Journal (TELLE)*, 2(2), 148–158. DOI <https://doi.org/10.36085/telle.v2i2.3770>
- Jefilia, T. P. (2023). Students' perception toward the use of zoom application in proposal seminar examination. *At-tawassuth: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, 8(1).
- Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for Academic Purposes: A guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge University Press.
- Juniasari, P. (2024). *A Qualitative Exploration of Students' Opinion on The Advantages of Attending Research Proposal Seminar Thesis*: Unpublished Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar.
- Kapur, R. (2022). *Understanding The Significance of Seminars And Workshops In Educational Institutions*. ResearchGate. University of Delhi
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Kumala, M., & Macora, Y. D. (2023). Students' Anxieties Toward Research Proposal Seminar. *Journal of English Education Research*, 8(2), 12–20.
- Mata, H., Latham, T. P., & Ransome, Y. (2016). Benefits of professional organization membership and participation in national conferences: Considerations for students and new professionals. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 24(3), 450–453. DOI <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839910370427>
- Meretsky, V. J., & Woods, T. A. N. (2013). A Blended-Learning Seminar Combining Experts, Students, and Practitioners: A Novel Approach for Practitioners In Training. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 13(3), 48–62.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2019). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation (4th ed.)*. Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook (4th ed.)*. Sage Publications.
- Pradikto, S. (2023). Students' Experiences on Their Thesis Proposal Seminar. *International Journal of Humanities Education and Social Sciences (IJHESS)*, 2(4), 1359–1365. DOI <https://doi.org/10.55227/ijhess.v2i4.374>
- Pratiwi, M. A., & Analido, B. (2018). EFL Students' Anxiety In Research Proposal Seminar. *Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on English Language and Teaching*, 6, 184–194.
- Purba, J. H. (1996). *Advantages of Proposal Seminar*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.
- Qiong, O. U. (2017). A Brief Introduction to Perception. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 15(4), 18–28. DOI <https://doi.org/10.3968/10055>
- Spruijt, A., Leppink, J., Wolfhagen, I., Bok, H., Mainhard, T., Scherpbier, A., van Beukelen, P., & Jaarsma, D. (2015). Factors Influencing Seminar Learning and Academic Achievement. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 42(3), 259–270. DOI <https://doi.org/10.3138/jvme.1114-119R2>

- Sugiyono. (2011). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Ulandari, P., Tadris, E., Program, S., & Faculty, T. (2025). *An Analysis of The Role of Speaking for Academic Setting Course on Students' Speaking Performance During Seminar Proposal*. Undergraduate Thesis. Institut Agama Islam Negeri Curup
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1985). *The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Mit Press.
- Walgito, B. (2010). *Pengantar psikologi umum*. Andi Yogyakarta.
- Yani, D. E. (2017). *Pengertian, tujuan dan manfaat seminar*. FMIPA Universitas Terbuka.
<https://pustaka.ut.ac.id/lib/wp-content/uploads/pdfmk/LUHT449002-M1.pdf>