

## ABSTRACT

English writing is indispensable and at the same time problematic for Chinese EFL learners. Large numbers of studies have been made in order to help students become effective writers, but the majority of studies have dealt with the broader aspects of writings. This study attempts to investigate rhetorical structures and their effectiveness in the writing samples of English majors (Chinese students studying English as their major subject). The data of this study is in the form of 144 English majors' writing at Yunnan Normal University Business School.

The findings indicated that Chinese English majors, basically, achieved effective exposition writings by using appropriate rhetorical structures. In the samples of students' writing, all appropriate grammatical resources in terms of generalized participant, appropriate processes, circumstance, adjunct and theme were used effectively. But, there is rare use of modality and adjuncts expressing reasoning, purpose, condition or concession by contrasting with English native speakers.

Although there are some limitations in the present research, the findings do provide an insight into the teaching of English writing in China. It is hoped this study will yield a more precise picture of rhetorical structures that are used by English majors. Some recommendations are made for future research which may in turn have a backwash effect on the teaching of English writing in the context of China.