



GENRE ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH ABSTRACT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The presence of an abstract is required in a research publication, and it is a recurring problem for graduate students. The purpose of this literature review article is to elucidate on the following topics by evaluating relevant research publications published in respectable journals between 2014 and 2021: (1) tendency of rhetorical move usage, (2) linguistic features usage in rhetorical moves, and (3) pedagogical implications of rhetorical moves on teaching writing. In previous studies, the following conclusions were confirmed: (1) rhetorical move usage is categorized as obligatory moves and supplementary moves, (2) linguistic features usage in rhetorical moves includes grammatical tense usage, voice form usage, metadiscourse marker, and grammar complexity, and (3) In several research, rhetorical moves yielded positive effects in teaching writing, especially for academic writing instruction and research. This study recommends that more extensive research be conducted, concentrating not just on the moves and steps but also on genre development and their implications. Furthermore, further research is expected to gain a deeper investigation into how genre analysis can improve one's writing quality.

Keywords: genre analysis, rhetorical moves, research abstract.

INTRODUCTION

A multidisciplinary endeavor, genre analysis defines a method for analyzing professional and academic discourse. Its fundamental strength is that it is principally for applied linguistic purposes, which indicates that the linguistic theory should be accessible to an ordinary practitioner of English for Specific Purposes (Bhatia, 1993). A genre study of research papers in the field of academic writing (English for Academic Purposes) reveals that "it has a standardized layout, form, and stylistic standards to an excessive degree" (Evans, 1994). Further, Genre analysis and genre knowledge are inextricably linked. Genre knowledge is defined as the resources required to appropriately react to the recurring requirements of a certain discourse community (Uzun, 2017). According to Tardy (2009), when genre knowledge is applied in various contexts and authors incorporate numerous knowledge parts to varying degrees, it can develop and extend. The underlying assumption is that someone's genre knowledge development will be influenced by their educational level and diverse academic experiences and that this growth will be reflected in their writing, particularly theses and dissertations written as part of a master's or doctoral degree program.

The abstract of a research paper is a separate genre that arose as a result of a well-defined and generally accepted communicative objective that most abstracts meet, independent of the subject matter they serve. An abstract, as it is commonly known, is a

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description or factual summary of a much longer report, and it is intended to provide the reader with a precise and comprehensive understanding of the entire piece (Bhatia, 1993). Because of its shortness and apparent goal, the abstract is one of the most explored genres in academia.

The genre and the model or pattern of an abstract are two characteristics that authors must understand and pay attention to while producing an abstract (Othman, 2011). Further, Swales and Feak (2009) described a genre is a text or discourse created to achieve a specific set of communicative objectives. The rhetorical moves or movement patterns, which Swales first created in his research *Aspects of Article Introduction* and is now known as the CARS (Create a Research Space) model, are used to achieve communicative goals. According to Kanoksilapatham (2007), "a move can be defined as a section of a text that performs a specific communicative function" (p. 23).

By examining the relevant research articles (RAs, henceforth) published in respectable journals between 2014 and 2021, this research aims to illuminate the key concerns of rhetorical moves and linguistic features in RAs abstracts. It presents the findings of the literature review in response to the following questions: (1) What is the tendency of rhetorical moves used in RAs abstracts? (2) How are linguistic features manifested in RAs abstract? and (3) What are the pedagogical implications of rhetorical moves and linguistic features in teaching writing?

METHODS

This study of literature review examined relevant research articles on genre analysis of research article abstracts published in national and international journals in 2014-2021.

Addressing research questions, 20 research articles were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After that, the articles were identified and categorized into three themes; (1) tendency of rhetorical move usage, (2) linguistic features usage in each move, and (3) pedagogical implications of rhetorical moves on teaching writing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Tendency of Rhetorical Move

As an answer to the main issue of rhetorical moves, this research will work on the assumption that Hyland's (2000), Bhatia's (1993), and Swales' (1990) move models are mostly used in RAs abstracts, moves occurrence are categorized as obligatory moves and supplementary moves, and linguistic features (for example: Andika, et al., 2018; Amnuai, 2019; Balagtas & Domingo, 2021; Can, et al., 2016; El-Dakhs, 2018; Fauzan, et al., 2020; Kurniawan & Sabila, 2021; Husnul, et al., 2021; Shamsabadi, et al., 2014; Pratiwi & Kurniawan, 2021).

In abstract writing, formal structure is accomplished through rhetorical moves. Several authors of academic writing guidelines have rather different suggestions on the content of an abstract. Hyland (2000), for example, developed a five rhetorical moves structure for RA abstract that comprises the structure of introduction, purpose, method, product, and conclusion. In a study of Shamsabadi et al. (2014), one of the issues investigated was the presence of moves in dentistry research abstracts of native and non-native journals, *Journal of Medical Council of Islamic Republic of Iran*, and *Journal of Esthetic and Restorative Dentistry*, respectively. Utilizing Swales (1990) as data analysis, the finding showed that method, result, and conclusion moves were the most frequent rhetorical moves in the two types of abstracts.

Investigating the same issue and exploiting the same analysis framework, Andika et al. (2018) found different results. Their research demonstrated that the most dominating motion identified in the abstracts published by three sets of writers (postgraduate students,

national authors, and international authors) in applied linguistics was the purpose, method, and result. Furthermore, when the three sets of abstracts were examined, the authors of postgraduate students were shown to be distinct. They utilized move 1 (Background/Introduction/Situation) less frequently than national and international authors.

Employing Hyland's (2000) model, Kamila & Laila's (2020) research findings showed that the majority of abstracts include a purpose, a method, and a product. The conclusion and the introduction were rarely used. Suwarni et al. (2021) also confirmed that most abstracts involved rhetorical moves similar to the previous study i.e., the manifestation of purpose, method and result moves. Moreover, Al-Khasawneh (2017) discovered that both native and non-native writers used the three-movement rhetorical structure (Purpose, Method, and Conclusion), with the introduction and conclusion moves differing significantly. When compared to their non-native counterparts, native authors were more inclined to use these two techniques. Furthermore, Behnam (2014) focused on two different disciplines, mathematics and applied linguistics, written by native and non-native (Iranian) students. The finding revealed that linguistics abstracts follow a standard pattern, while the abstracts of mathematics in these two languages deviate from the standards in terms of move. Besides, a greater difference in move structure is seen across languages in mathematics.

Different from the previous research, Aziz et al. (2021) analyzed 30 TEFL abstracts written by Pakistani through Bhatia's (1993) and Hyland's (2000) models. The result exposed that the thesis abstracts do not comply with the criteria as stated in the analytical framework. Further, the rhetorical moves were not properly organized. Applying Bathia's four-move structure and Swales & Feak's five-move structure, Kosasih (2018) revealed that the aim-method-result move structure was the most commonly employed abstract move structure in all four disciplines. The abstracts that were in line with Swales & Feak's five-move structures and Bhatia's four-move structure were less than 16% respectively.

800 abstracts were analyzed by Putri & Kurniawan (2021) to determine the different ways rhetorical devices were manifested in master's theses and dissertations written by local and foreign graduate lecturers, and to investigate the connection between the manifestations and the author's genre knowledge development. To that purpose, they analyzed the data using Hyland's (2000) model and conducted interviews to find out the genre knowledge development. The findings revealed that the rhetorical structure of abstracts written by local and foreign graduates was comparable. The study also discovered that an author's educational level and supportive academic environment have a significant impact on their genre knowledge trajectories.

In addition to rhetorical moves, some researchers also investigated the steps manifested in each move. Pratiwi & Kurniawan (2021) attempted to investigate the occurrences of the moves and steps in eight abstracts of the master thesis and dissertation in two languages (English and Indonesian). This study made use of the five-move abstract model proposed by Hyland (2000). Final papers in both languages shared parallels in step manifestations, with the fewest step manifestations overall.

Having similar objectives, Fauzan et al. (2020) found different manifestations of rhetorical moves. They typically consist of purpose, method, and findings. Meanwhile, the introduction move is optional, and the conclusion move is conventional as the findings move. Moreover, no steps are obligatory.

Besides investigating the manifestation of moves and steps, several researchers were also interested in finding the move pattern and move category. According to Can, et al. (2016), frequently non-linear and semi-abstracts were identified more than those containing all five moves in the expected order. Researchers tended to embed only purpose and method move in the very first sentence of their abstracts. This combination of closely similar move patterns within sentences appears to assist authors not only save space, but also produce more cohesiveness. Meanwhile, the findings of Balagtas & Domingo's (2020) study showed that most of the abstracts written by MMSU graduate students contain four moves (4-2-3-5), and move one (1) is the least occurrence. Moves (4-2-3-5) that occur

regularly in a genre are considered obligatory and move (1) with lower frequency is considered optional.

Both Amnuai (2019) and Husnul et al. (2021) analyzed sixty RA abstracts following Hyland's (2005) five-move model and considered the move category. Husnul et al. (2021) found that Purpose, Method, and Product moves exist in the abstracts and are categorized as obligatory. Contrast to those three moves, Introduction and Conclusion moves cannot be identified in a total of sixty RA abstracts so that these two moves are not categorized as obligatory. Having different corpus, international and Thai corpus, Amnuai's (2019) research result disclosed that the move is categorized as obligatory, complementary, and optional. The occurrence of the Purpose, Method, and Product moves was similar, but the difference was in the occurrence of the Introduction and Conclusion moves.

Whereas Duan & Wei (2021) investigated 60 RA abstracts consisting of 30 English law and 30 Chinese law journals using Swales' CAR model (1990) and Hyland's five-move model (2000). The results revealed that in both languages, the Introduction, Gap-filling, and Contribution moves are obligatory, but the move of Methodology is optional. However, English abstracts, which have more intricate move structures than Chinese abstracts, tend to describe the study's objectives directly, whereas Chinese papers seek to highlight the "Gap" first.

Previous studies examining rhetorical moves in multidisciplinary RA abstracts from respectable national and international journals have consistently highlighted its manifestations, patterns, and categories, but rarely on genre development. The tendency of native and non-native writers to utilize distinct rhetorical move models in RA abstracts may be due to varying requirements and even standards established implicitly by each publication. However, there are no publications that establish mandates or norms.

The Linguistic Features Usage in Each Move

Besides identifying rhetorical moves, linguistic features in RA abstracts are also essential and have been progressively focused on by various research studies since they provide more insight into the written genre and provide a specific communicative function. The studies have been carried out by Andika, et al., 2018; Amnuai, 2019; Balagtas & Domingo, 2021; Fauzan et al., 2020; Kurniawan & Sabila, 2021; Husnul et al., 2021; Shamsabadi et al., 2014; Pratiwi & Kurniawan, 2021.

Based on findings of some studies, linguistic features are manifested mostly in the use of tenses and sounds. Amnuai (2019) delineated the active form of the present simple tense was the preferred choice for presenting each move in both sets of data. The present perfect tense, past tense, and passive voice were rarely used. Both the Method and Product moves included a combination of active and passive voices. Furthermore, Amnuai (2019) stated that the findings might be valuable in educational practice implementation. The RA genre structures, in other words, may be utilized to create instructional materials and serve as a reference source for genre-related writing classes.

Both Kurniawan & Sabila (2021) and Husnul et al. (2021) found that in almost all rhetorical moves, the simple present tense predominates, and the active voice is used more frequently than the passive voice. Furthermore, the employment of certain grammatical tenses in rhetorical moves is influenced by English skill, community practice, and other factors comparable to those affecting the use of the rhetorical move model (Husnul, et al., 2021). Moreover, Agbaglo & Fiadzomor (2018) revealed that each move was characterized by unique configurations of linguistic features, particularly tense, voice, and grammatical subject roles.

Comparing the abstracts written in English and Indonesian, Pratiwi & Kurniawan (2021) explicated that because the Indonesian language lacks verb tense markers, verb tense was not used in the abstracts written in Indonesian. Surprisingly, the present tense was used to describe the issue in master thesis abstracts written in English. It can be demonstrated that the active voice predominated in all moves in terms of voice utilization.

The use of active voice in abstracts suggests that the authors attempted to concentrate on the agent rather than the action in the sentence.

Besides tenses and voice, sentence type and metadiscourse device were identified in Andika et al. (2018) study. Their study discovered that Postgraduate students, national writers, and foreign authors frequently use active voice, present tense, concise sentences, and hedges as Linguistic Features. The studies also demonstrated that the use of interactional metadiscourse devices is highly infrequent and dominated by hedges, which are mostly found in Move 4, whereas the use of the writers' attitudinal position and self-reference words is less common in the abstract.

Additionally, Fauzan et al. (2020) revealed the results of the linguistic complexity of the abstractions reveal that the occurrence of nouns varies as the sentence subject or object corresponds to the communicative functions of the sentences. Meanwhile, Aziz et al. (2021) exposed that simple present tense, active voice, and impersonal style of writing tend to be found mostly in abstracts written by Pakistani.

The Pedagogical Implications of Rhetorical Move Analysis on Academic Writing

The comprehension of rhetorical moves is critical for language learners, instructors, and EFL writers to grasp the nature of written discourse and how discourse analysis helps to the understanding of written language in use. By examining rhetorical actions, we may understand more about written language rules and what the writers are attempting to express. As a result, rhetorical move analysis elucidates how certain writing patterns are linguistically arranged. A number of studies have discussed the pedagogical implication of rhetorical move analysis in academic writing (Khasawaneh, 2017; Putri & Kurniawan 2021; Balagtas & Domingo, 2021; Azis et al, 2021; El-Dakhs, 2018; Fauzan et al, 2020; Putri & Kurniawan, 2021; Benham, 2014; Pratiwi & Kurniawan, 2021). Rhetorical move analysis aids non-native authors in better understanding the development occurring in academic writing both linguistically and structurally. Non-native authors will be better able to publish their academic writing in internationally recognized journals and discourse communities as a result of this awareness.

It is in line with Khasawaneh (2017) as well as Putri & Kurniawan (2021), who claimed that rhetorical move analysis might benefit both native and non-native authors in academic writing. Hyland (2000) added that bettering one's genre expertise will assist novice writers to become more involved in their disciplinary community. Bhatia (1997) also stressed the value of rhetorical move analysis in delivering important information to authors by exposing them to a specific genre standard.

Further, Balagtas & Domingo (2021) and Azis et al. (2021) mentioned that the implication of rhetorical move analysis is for academic writing since one should prescribe the moves that are considered obligatory and optional. In this case, there are some move patterns as proper guidelines for academic writing that one must follow. The tenses of the verbs in each move, as well as the point of view, should be regulated in order to standardize the linguistic elements of all academic writing. In line with Putri & Kurniawan (2021), rhetorical move analysis aids in the strengthening and development of one's knowledge and competence in academic writing.

Then, Fauzan et al. (2020) also stated the use of rhetorical move analysis may be seen in the teaching of academic writing and the development of argumentative essay styles. An international journal's rhetoric of academic writing exposes two language teaching concerns: 1) the style of a written text and producing academic text; and 2) rhetoric emerges linguistically in the form of word choice for an argument. It means that rhetoric should be emphasized in academic writing when teaching argumentative essays. Rhetoric's fluency in academic discourse should be stressed when teaching academic publications. According to Hyland (2004), novice EFL writers, graduate students who struggle with creating well-structured academic writing, should be expressly provided with rhetorical moves of specific genres so that they can be approved and certified.

Next, El-Dakhs (2018) revealed the significance of giving specialized training in abstract writing to researchers who want to publish in prestigious journals. Because they mirror the major feature of abstracts in more prominent journals, the following implications for RAs abstract writing instruction in the subject of linguistics might be proposed: 1) Writers must learn how to highlight the findings of their investigations, which are their primary contributions to the area of knowledge; 2) Writers should be taught how to compare and contrast findings with other studies, models, or hypotheses; 3) Writers should emphasize their research's uniqueness, such as the use of novel equipment; 4) Writers should practice employing punctuation marks, hedges, boosters, and self-mentions in effective ways; 5) Writers should be encouraged to use variety and clarity in their writing.

Last, according to Benham (2014), Pratiwi & Kurniawan (2021), pedagogically, a rhetorical move analysis can help students, particularly non-native authors and postgraduate students, with their academic writing. It is also thought to aid students in drafting their academic writing for research papers in the future. According to Bhatia (1997), genre analysis can provide significant information to novice writers by exposing them to the conventions of a single genre, and as they gain genre expertise, they will be able to study and develop more complicated genres. Loi and Evans (2010) declared that novice writers who understand genre practices can not only create more complex genres based on genre patterns, but they can also benefit in the long run from explicit knowledge of genre conventions because genre knowledge provides learners with a thorough and complete understanding of specific texts or the university.

It can be concluded that when one gains core knowledge of genre analysis, for example in academic writing, they are informed of the rhetorical moves of its genres. Simply stated, genre analysis may be employed in academic writing to help detect discipline variations in terms of moves, linear sequence, and function of each step. As a result, new academics will be able to be more thoughtful in crafting their future academic writing. Additionally, rhetorical move analysis enables language practitioners to use language items for particular objectives such as teaching, learning, and linguistic research (Moreno & Swales, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge on genre analysis, rhetoric moves, and linguistic features. They can be beneficial to EFL writers because they allow them to better comprehend the language and structural changes that are taking place in academic writing. EFL writers will boost their chances of publishing their academic work in reputable international journals and discourse communities as a result of this understanding. Furthermore, this research helps to build and expand one's knowledge and ability in academic writing.

However, this research is limited only to research articles published in 2014-2021. This study proposes a suggestion for further research to gain a deeper investigation into how genre analysis in terms of rhetorical move analysis and linguistic features analysis can improve one's writing quality. Furthermore, a deeper investigation of genre analysis is useful to find out the significance of this study in shaping one's future academic writing.

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