ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC REALIZATIONS OF ABSTRACTS ON ASIAN EFL JOURNAL

Nurhayati, S.S., M.Pd.
Akademi Bahasa Asing BSI Jakarta
Email: nurhayati.nhi@bsi.ac.id

Abstract

Recently, the abstract is a compulsory component of a Research Article (RA) for most scientific journals. It is acknowledged that abstracts and RAs differ in their function; linguistic realizations, and rhetorical structure (Lores 2004: 281). The aim of the study is to analyze the linguistic realizations of each move in RA abstracts. The sources of data are 50 (fifty) abstracts of Asian EFL journal articles published between 2005-2009. The writer listed each move frequency of rhetorical structure based on Hyland's theory; Introduction (M1), Purpose (M2), Method (M3), Results (M4) and Conclusion (M5).Then, she analyzed lingusitic realizations of each move focusing on the lexis and the verb tense. It is found that there is variety of the lexis' use of various Criticisms, Gap and Innovation in the field in Move 1 as well as nominal references and typical verbs in Move 2,3,4 and 5. The use of Modals is mostly used in Move 5 and that-complement clause in Move 4 and 5. The self reference pronoun is barely used. The analysis of the Verb tense found that present simple and active voice were the most frequently used in all moves findings. It is hoped that the result of the research can be as an empirical reference for novice writers of similar researches.

Keywords: Genre, Research article abstracts, Rhetorical Structure, Linguistic Realizations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Genre is quite easily used to refer to a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken and written. The issue then whether genre as a structuring device for language teaching is doomed to encourage the unthinking application of formulas, or whether such an outcome is rather an oversimplification brought about pedagogical convenience. (Swales.1990:33).

The research article (RA) is produced to communicate new knowledge to members of the academic community and persuade them to accept the claims (Hyland, 2001). The RA itself can be in the forms of abstracts, research presentations, grant proposals, theses and dissertations, or books and monographs.

Nowadays, the role of abstracts in RAs has changed. It has become progressively more important within the last few decades. This is mainly due to the explosion in the number of RAs published annually,and also their increasing online availability. As the most important genre in academic community, the RA has received wide attention in genre analysis, a means of studying spoken and written discourse.

Bhatia (2014:42) in John Flowerdew   states that abstracts provide a summary of the research article and uses the overall organisation of the research article to arrive at the rhetorical moves found in abstracts : introduction (purpose), method, result, and conclusion.
According to Bazerman (1984), ' The article's abstract serves as one further step in turning the article in an object, for the abstract considers the articles as a whole and then makes a representation of it.' (Swales, 1993: 179).

In accordance with Lores (2004:281) that abstracts and RAs differ in their function, linguistic realizations, and rhetorical structure, so the writer will focus on the analysis of linguistic realizations of the abstracts on EFL ASEAN Journal.

2. THEORITICAL REVIEW

The Nature of Genre

There are some conventions that determine the feature of specific genre. Swales (1990:58) defines genre as a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes, varying in their prototypicality and estabilishing constraints on its content and form. He believes that some genres are structured in such a way that they influence the choice of style on the part of the users, and posses patterns of rhetorical organization in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience that are prototypical and used by others. Swales (1990:33-34) explained that genre is used for some section purposes in the uses of the term in folklore, literary studies,linguistics and rhetoric.

According to John Flowerdew (2014: 23), genres are essentially defined in terms of the use of language in conventionalised communicative settings, which give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of specialised disciplinary and social groups, which in turn establish relatively stable structural forms and, to some extent, even constrain the use of lexico-grammatical resources.

Genres are often associated with recurring rhetorical contexts as we draw on familiar resources to address routine communication needs. (Hyland, 2009a:26)As Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995:6) point out that genres are inherently dynamic rhetorical structures that can be manipulated according to conditions of use, and that genre knowledge is therefore best conceptualized as a form of situated cognition embedded in disciplinary cultures.

Hyland (2009b:27) defines genres are also related to each other in clusters of dependence which help construct a particular context.

The Nature of Research Article

A research article (RA) is taken to be written text usually limited to a few thousand words, that reports on some investigation carried out by its author or authors. In additon, the RA will usually relate the findings within it to those of others, and may also examine issues of theory and/or methodology. The fact that the research article usually appears within the covers of a particular journal means. Journals declare policies and requirements in which are the obvious need to maintain an acceptable level of consistency among articles with regard to sectioning, style or referencing and so on. (Swales,1990 : 93) Swales (1990:177) states the research article (RA) is the key genre both quantitatively and qualitatively. The RA has a dynamic relationship with all other public research-process genres.

A research article is an article in a professional journal that outlines the research an individual performed about a particular topic. It is as primary sources of information. A research article is found in a journal. A journal is a professional publication associated with an official organization or containing a history of reputable research and documentation. A research article generally begins with an abstract, which is a brief synopsis of the information contained within the article and the research that the writer performed. Then it will include a description of the research performed, an explanation of the results of that research and an idea about the importance of those results.

The Nature of Move-Step in Genre Analysis

A move in genre analysis is defined as a 'discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse' (Swales, 2004:228-229). Pho (2009:17) indicated, 'each move has its own communicative purpose, which, together with other moves, contributes to the general communicative purpose of the text'. The distinctive organization of the moves in texts belonging to one genre is "what provides its identity and distinguishes it from other genres" (Parodi, 2014: 67).

The identification of moves is a crucial step in a rhetorical structure analysis. Swales indicated that the identification of moves, and consequently the setting of move boundaries, is established by 'a mixed bag of criteria'   (2004: 229). Researchers have also turned to linguistic features to help them in identify moves and their boundaries.

In 1990, Swales revised the structure to a three-move pattern, called the create-a-research-space model (CARS model). Swales (1993:127) in his textual overview of the

research article, proposes that the macro–structure of the research article typically consists of an Introduction, a Methods section, Results, Discussion and Conclusion.

The CARS model has influenced numerous later studies on the structure of the introduction. As Swales (2004:226) said, 'the basically three-part model for English language introductions in many leading journals is or has become prototypical.' Some scholars later modified the CARS model in order to account for the texts analyzed.

Ngowu (1997:120) explains that move means a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features which give the segment a uniform orientation and signal the content of discourse in it. It is determined by reference to linguistic clues in the discourse, such as : statement which signal information from content occuring later in the text; lexical items which signal the information contained in each move; conjuncts which signal discourse relations in the text; statements which signal the end of a move. Hyland (2000) proposed a five-move structure to analyze academic abstracts : Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product,and Conclusion.

The Nature of Abstract

Lores (2004 :281) has stated that RA abstracts are different from RAs in the following three aspects : function, rhetorical structure and linguistic realizations.Because of the increasing interest in abstracts, quite a few analyses on the part-genre have been conducted. Santos (1996) in Yun Li (2011:7) chose to explore the textual organization of RA abstracts at two levels :

1. The features that constitute abstracts at macro-level of textual organization.
2. The sentence level features at the micro-level of textual analysis.

Bhatia (2014:42) in John Flowerdew states that abstracts provide a summary of the research article and uses the overall organisation of the research article to arrive at the rhetorical moves found in abstracts : introduction (purpose), method, result, and conclusion.

According to Bazerman (1984), ' The article's abstract serves as one further step in turning the article in an object, for the abstract considers the articles as a whole and then makes a representation of it.' (Swales, 1993: 179)

Linguistic Realizations of Abstract

Another focus of the analysis of abstracts is the linguistic realizations of the moves. However, most of these studies appeared to analyze the lexis of the moves (e.g. Anderson & Maclean,1997; Lau, 2004; Santos, 1996), and little research, except for Salager-Meyer (1992), has paid attention to the verb tense of the moves in its own right. Salager-Meyer (1992) found when examining 84 medical abstracts in research papers, case reports, and review articles that different verb tenses perform different functions, For example, the past tense is concerned with the history type of discourse, so it is widely used in the moves of Purpose, Methods, Results, and Case presentation. The present tense serves the

purpose of enhancing and emphasizing the generalizability of specific findings, and is thus prevalent in the moves of Conclusion, Recommendation, and Data synthesis. Salager-Meyer's (1992) study exemplifies how medical abstracts can be constructed in terms of verb tense. In fact, the tense usage in abstracts is quite complicated as acknowledged by Swales and Feak (2004: 283), who mentioned that although the opening statements and conclusions are often in the present tense, there appears to be considerable disciplinary and individual tense variation with sentences dealing with results'.Given the fact that little research has examined the usage of verb tense per sentence, it is deemed appropriate to investigate the verb tense of moves as a linguistic realization element in applied linguistic abstracts.

Graetz (1985:125) said, "The abstract is characterized by the use of past tense , third person, passive, and non-use of negatives.It avoids subordinate, clauses,uses phrases instead of clauses, words instead of phrases. It avoids abbreviation, jargon, symbols and other language shorcuts which might lead to confusion. It is written in tightly worded sentences, which avoid repetition,meaningless expressions, superlatives, adjectives, illustrations, preliminaries, descriptive details , examples,footnotes. "

Abstracts are not only characterized by the use of Past Tense, the Present tense has been considerably popular as well. Malcolm (1987) says the Present is likely to occur in the frequent references to what may be found in the full text. By starting from a generalist perspective, she puts forward three hypotheses :

1. Generalizations will tend to be in the Present tense.
2. References to specific experiments will tend to be in the Past.
3. References to areas of inquiry will tend to be in the Present Perfect tense.

The use of Present Tense is used because it intimates that the research is alive. On the other hand the Past tense needs emphasizing or whenever a cautious approach to applications and extensions seem warranted (James, 1984b).

The latter observed a preference for the use of past tense, third person, passive voice, non – use of negatives, the avoidance of subordinate clauses, abbreviation, jargon, symbols, repetition, superlatives, adjectives, examples and redudancy. In some case, active verbs also occur, and present tends to occur in commentary rather than in narrative of what was done. Oster (1981: 77) proposed the following principal hypotheses about the use of tense :

1. The Present Perfect is used to claim generality about past literature. The Past tense is used to claim non generality about past literature.
2. The Past tense is used when it refers to quantitative results of past literature that are non supportive of some aspects of the work described in the technical article. The Present tense is used when it refers to quantitative results of past literature that are supportive or non relevant.
3. The Present Perfect tense is used to indicate the continued discussion of some of the information in the sentence in which Present Perfect tense occurs,

Therefore, this research aims to give the description of micro structure which Lores (2004:281) has stated that RA abstracts are different from RAs in the following three aspects : function, rhetorical structure and linguistic realizations. Then the writer chooses to dig more information of its topic.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative descriptive method is used to analyze the data set. The source of the research was Research Article Abstracts of The Asian EFL Journals and the research samples were 50 article abstracts taken from Asian EFL Journals which were randomly chosen from 2005-2008 publications.

In collecting data, the writer analyzed each research article abstract. First, she listed each frequency move of rhetorical structure. Then, she analyzed the linguistic realizations discussing the lexis of the moves and the use of verb tense of each move.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First things first, the writer analyzed move frequency of each move in of 50 Asean EFL Abstracts to be later used to easily analyzed the linguistic realizations of each move. This analysis applied Hyland's (2000) model. The findings of frequency of the move occurence in the abstracts are showed on the table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of the Move Occurence in the Asian EFL Abstracts.

Move	Total (n=50)	Percentage (n=100%)
1. Introduction	24	48%
2. Purpose	50	100%
3. Method	50	100%
4. Product	50	100%
5. Conclusion	38	76%

After getting the frequency of move structure, the writer focused on the main analysis of the linguistic realizations of each move on the abstracts. The two aspects of the linguistic

realizations were the lexis (e.g. Anderson & Maclean,1997; Lau, 2004; Santos, 1996), and the verb tense (e.g. Salager-Meyer,1992).

a. LEXIS

Table 2. The Use of Lexis in Each Move

Move	Lexis
Move1 (Introduction)	1) Introduction was analyzed by 5 (five) categories: *a.* **Criticism of previous research (4).** Three of four excerpts for this criticism contained of negative words. ✓ *There has been considerably research which* documents the prevalnce of writing [...}. (2006-13) ✓ There **has not** *been much critical examination of constructvism in ELT. (2006-25)* ✓ *However*, though the advantages of all these corpora to language teaching and learning are *well acknowledged*, they **haven't** **produced** tangible pedagogical results' in an EFL classroom context. (2008-38) b. **Gap (3)** which consisted of cue words. ✓ Firth and Wagner (1998) point out the *imbalancen in the field of SLA of [...]* (2005-7) ✓ *However,* the problem *remains* of how to incorporate this knowledge into everyday teaching practices in the multilingual classroom.(2008-34 ✓ Although unplanned vocabulary instruction can provide many of the conditions [...], it spontaneous nature means it has *certain limitation.*(2008-35) c. **Criticism of** : • **Theory (1)** : This is the report of *Critical analysis of one aspect of Gardner's theory*. (2006-14) • **Method (3)** ✓ *In language classroom turns of talk* facilitate the meaning-making process as students and teachers collaboratively, [...] (2005-8) ✓ *With the implementation of an extensive reading scheme and school-based assesment*, student [...] (2007-21) ✓ *The teacher-centered approach* is gradually giving way to learner errors. However, even today in many classrooms, the teachers remains a donor of ... (20087-27) ✓ Opposed to *the traditional teacher-centered pedagogy* where [...] (2008-28) • **Model (1)**

	✓ *The Concentic Circles Model* promoted by Kachru has had a tremendous impact on the teaching and research enterprise, [...](2005-6)
	    • **Argument (1)**
	✓ *It's argued that neither a top-down strategy, nor a bottom-up one will be effective in* [...] (2005-1)
	    • **View (4)**
	✓ NNSs (non native speakers) of English who are EFL teachers candidates have long experienced isolation, frustration [...] (2005-3)
	✓ The course-book culture rampant in current foreign and second language settings appears [...] (2006-18)
	✓ [...] Taiwanese teachers of EFL have to cope the challenge of technological and pedagogical shifts [...] (2008-36)
	✓ [...], however, the obligation for pre-requisite and/or ongoing English instruction is generally understood. (2008-39)
	d. **Innovation in the field (2)**
	✓ Therefore, *an online course* was used in [...] (2005-9)
	✓ *The 2003 Action plan* corresponds [...] (2006-17)
	
	e. **Criticism in Discussion or Conclusion (4)**
	    ✓ Offering a content course using non-native varieties of English *was significant step* [...] (2007-20)
	    ✓ Assisted Repeated Reading *has been found effective* for enhancing reading fluency [...] (2009-43)
	    ✓ To draw EFl teachers' attention to pronunciation difficulties resulting from L1 phonotactic constrains, [...] (2009-45)
	    ✓ Teachers' observations, students' experiences, and the review of related literature *indicate* that language anxiety is a significant factor adversely affecting the language learning process. (2009-50)
	2) Connectors of contrast : *however, though, although*

Move 2 (Purpose)	1. Diectic Item : *This, The* 2. Nominal references : *Paper, Purpose, Researcher, Case Study, Aim of the present study, Purpose of this paper, Approach, Study , Study, Article, Present study, Analysis, Purpose of the present study*. 3. Repoting Verbs : *argue, describe, form and theorize, investigate, report, highlight, take on, examine, indicate, find out, analyze, aim to investigate, discuss, develop, explore, aim at developing, was, provide, in order to find out, attempt to look, design to determine, aim at exploring, guide*. 4. Pronoun : *'I'*
Move 3 (Method)	1. Typical verbs : *conduct, include, form, assert, collect, participate, divide, gather, identify, administer, ask, emphasize, assign, select, interview, compose, codify, analyze, rate, employ, develop, test*.

	2. Pronoun : *'We'*
Move 4 (Product)	1. Opening Nouns : *model, critical reflections, study, result, paper, analysis, cases, suggestions, signs, data, finding, theory, discourse.* 2. Reporting verbs : *illustrate, point to, tore down, appropriate, indicate, suggest, assume, consider, reveal, trace, lead, show, find, provide, lay, yield, identify, to be, tend to, mean, conclude, emphasize, give, offer, imply, validate, argue.* 3. *That*-complement clause : *Result indicated <u>that the camp was beneficial,</u> the study finds <u>that the participants wre influenced</u> [...]* 4. General subject : *'it'*
Move 5 (Conclusion)	1. Nominal references : *practical suggestions, paper, recommendation for further study, discussion, study, pedagogical implication, implication, research, article, findings.* 2. Verbs : *make, suggest, conclude, include, bring and provide, demonstrate, reveal, argue, examine, propose, present, use,lead, allow, highlight, enable, show, attempt to explain, narrate, to be (is,are, were), find, have, point (out), aim to provide, analyze and give, prove.* 3. Modals : *must, should, may, could, will* 4. Pronoun : *' I '* 5. *That*-complement clause : *the paper concudes <u>that there is a need</u> [...], it is hoped <u>that the paper will be used for both researcher</u> [...]*

b. VERB TENSE

Table 3. Frequency of Verb Tense and Voice of Each Move

Move	Tenses							Total
	Present (Pre.)	Past	Pre. Perfect	Pre.+ Pre. Perfect	Pre.+ Past	Future	Present + Future	
Move 1	14	3	4	2	-	-	1	24
Move 2	34	15	-	-	1	-	-	50
Move 3	22	24	-	-	4	-	-	50
Move 4	25	20	-	-	4	1	-	50
Move 5	27	9	-	-	-	1	1	38

Move	Voices			Total
	Active	Passive	Active + Passsive	
Move 1	15	3	1	19*
Move 2	50	-	-	50
Move 3	22	29	9	50
Move 4	42	3	5	50
Move 5	28	7	1	38

Notes: * Since there were 5 excerpts neither including active nor passive in Move 1, as a result the total of the voices was 19.

Table 2 showed that the writer analyzed the problem statements of Move 1 (Introduction) which accorded to Stotebury's (2006) suggestions that the Criticism of Previous Reasearch which fell into five categories: criticism of previous research; gap; criticism of theory, method, model, argument, view; innovation in the field; criticism in the discussion or conclusion move. It was used since it was more proper and specific in analyzing the Move 1 (Introduction Move). There were also negative, cue words, some connectors of contrast, and other words used to identify each category of criticism of previous research in Move 1. Besides, it was found there were more various nominal references or opening nouns, and typical/reporting verbs used in Move 2, 3, 4 and 5 referring to the function of each move. The use of self-reference pronoun is hardly found in the present study. It was found only in 2 abstracts by using " I " and " we ". The self-reference pronouns indicated a goal of self-promotion (Hyand: 2003) and to make the writer's presence explicit in abstracts (Pho: 2008).

Then, the use of "this" explained that it was writer's effort to incorporate the abstract into the body of the paper, and "the" conveyed that the main article was viewed as standing apart from the abstract. Modal auxiliaries of "must", "should", "may", "could", "will" were used mostly in Move 5 which referred to obligation, possibility, ability or prediction about the results of the research.

The use of that-complement clause was found in Move 4 and 5. It was employed to report ad demostrate the writers' results. Finally, a general subject " it " used in Move 4 represented an attempt to generalize the source of comment and present it objectively.

As shown in Table 3 of Verb Tense, the Present simple was the most frequent tense used in Move 1 (Introduction), Move 2 (Purpose), Move 4 (Product) and Move 5 (Conclusion). It was in the line with Malcolm's (1987) suggestion. It says the Present is likely to occur in the frequent references to what may be found in the full text. The use of present refers to generalizations (Malcom: 1987) as well as intimates that the research is alive (James: 1984b). The latter observed a preference for the use of past tense which also occured frequently. Move 3 was the move which used the Past tense frequently. The Method move mostly described the approach/ steps of doing research. It was in line with James' (1984b) sugggestion that the Past tense needs emphasizing or whenever a cautious approach to applications and extensions seem warranted . Malcolm (1987) says that references to specific experiments will tend to be in the Past.

When comparing the results of the present study with those of Salager-Meyer, similarities and differences can be found. For example in both studies, the present tense was used in Move 5 (Conclusion), and the past tense was used in Move 3 (Method) and Move 4 (Product). Neverthless, in Salager-Meyer (1992), Move 2 (Purpose) was realized in the past tense, while in this study Move 2 was realized in the present tense.

There were 6 excerpts which used Present Perfect in Move 1 though two of them were combined with Present Simple. In this present study, the Present Perfect is used not only to claim generality about past literature but also to indicate the continued discussion of some of the information and it was in accordance with Oyster's (1981:77) suggestion.

An additional tense which appeared in this study is that Future tense. The Future tense was found in move 4 (Product) and move 5 (Conclusion). It indicated that the future tense was used to show the result and the conclusion which have an effect for the future research.

It is interesting that there was a double tense in a few moves; Present+Present Perfect, Present+Past, and Present + Future. The Present + Past was unsignificantly used in Move 2, 3 and 4. Move 3 (Method) used the Present tense to refer the approach employed in the research and the past tense used when the specific method applied. Furthermore, the Present + Future was used in Move 5 (Conclusion) which referred to the results and the implications of the research in the future. However, the number of the double tense was not significant. Finally, the most frequent voice of any moves was Active voice.

5. CONCLUSION

The following important results of the   linguistic realization analysis of RA abstracts on EFL ASEAN journal are :

a. Lexis

1) Move 1 (Introduction) was analyzed by 5 (five) categories. They are Criticism of previous research containing of negative words; Gap; Criticism of Theory, Method, Model, Argument and View; Innovation in the field; Criticism in Discussion or Conclusion which contained cue words and connectors of contrast to the function of each Move.

2) The more various nominal references or opening nouns and typical verbs were in Move 2, 3, 4 and 5 referring to the function of each move.

3) The use of self-reference pronoun is rarely found in the present study. It was found only in 3 abstracts by using " I " and " we" showing the subjectivity and personal view.

4) Modal auxiliaries of "must", "should", "may", "could", "will" were used mostly in Move 5 which referred to obligation, possibility, ability or prediction about the results of the research.

5) The use of that-complement clause was found in Move 4 and 5that was employed to report and demostrate the writers' results.

6) Finally, a general subject " it " used in Move 4 represented an attempt to generalize the source of comment and present it objectively.

b. Verb tense

1) The Present simple was the most frequent tense used in Move 1 (Introduction), Move 2 (Purpose), Move 4 (Product) and Move 5 (Conclusion). It was in the line with Malcolm's (1987) suggestion.

2) The Past tense was frequently used in Move 3 which decribed the approach or steps of doing research. It was in line with James' (1984b) sugggestion that the Past tense needs emphasizing or whenever a cautious approach to applications and extensions seem warranted.

3) The Present Perfect was employed in Move 1 to show the running discussion.

4) The Future tense was found in Move 4 and Move 5 to indicate the outcome of the research.

5) There existed unsignificantly a double tense in any moves whose patterns; Present+Present Perfect, Present+Past, Present + Future.

6) Active voice was the most dominant in the all moves. Passive voice was used more in Move 3 (Method Move).

Finally, the results of this study hopefully gives some contribution to novice writers to do the similar researches and the writer of this paper will be more comprehensive to analyze this research topic for next study.

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