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A COMPARISON STUDY ON THE RHETORICAL STRUCTURES OF ABSTRACTS IN TWO DISCIPLINES INDEXED JOURNALS

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Abstract
The abstract generally offers a concise overview of the main aspects of the research. It provides background context for the study, highlights the research problem that prompted the investigation, outlines the data collection and analysis methods used, and presents a summary of the key findings (Fiadzomor et al, 2024). This study aimed to compare the rhetorical structures and their occurrence in abstracts from IT journals and Language, Literature, and Education (LLE) journals, as well as to assess how well writers adhere to abstract writing guidelines. The study analyzed 60 abstracts—30 from each journal type—using Hyland's (2000) model. The analysis revealed 19 different move structures, with six abstracts following the same patterns and 13 displaying varied structures. The most common move structures were M1-M2-M3-M4-M5 and M1-M2-M3-M4. There were instances of merging and repetition in moves 2 and 3, and the average awareness of using all move structures was higher in LLE (93%) compared to IT abstracts (87%). Hyland's (2000) five-move model provides a framework for maintaining consistency in abstract organization by emphasizing the significance and order of each move. The study found that certain structures included repetitive or cyclical moves, indicating the importance of offering clear textual guidance on the correct sequence.

Keywords— comparison, journals' abstracts, Hyland's, rhetorical structure

Introduction

Research articles have been very common among academicians for their study or job requirements. (Xu, 2024) stated the abstract acts as a concise summary of academic papers, serving to guide readers, aid in retrieval and referencing, and shape their interest, perceptions, and assessments of the main text. Swales (1990) in (Nurhayati et al., 2022) explains that a research article (RA) is typically limited to a few thousand words and reports the findings of an investigation conducted by its author or authors. In addition, the RA will typically compare its findings to those of other researchers and may examine issues of theory and/or methodology. It will be published or has been published in a research journal or, less frequently, in a book-length collection of edited papers.

Comprehending a few thousand words containing the results of the research in a RA takes longer time and not everyone is willing to do it. (Fiadzomor et al., 2024 expounded research, whether presented as articles theses, or dissertations, is an essential skill for students at all levels of higher education globally. A crucial component of these research works is the abstract.

Previous research on research article abstracts has concentrated on two main aspects: the rhetorical or move structure (e.g., (Tamela, 2019; Alyousef, 2021; Galaidin, 2023) and the linguistic expression of these moves (e.g., Amnuai, 2019; Gani and Kurniawan, 2021; Suwandi, 2024). As cited in (Ahmadi, 2022), numerous studies have examined and proposed frameworks for various sections of research articles (RAs) (e.g., Kanoksilapatham, 2005; Lewin et al., 2001; Nwogu, 1989). Some have specifically focused on individual sections, such as the introduction (e.g., Samraj, 2002; Swales,

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1990), methods (e.g., Chen & Kuo, 2012; Lim, 2006), results (e.g., Brett, 1994), and discussion (e.g., Basturkmen, 2012; Peacock, 2002). A number of studies compared abstracts from diverse fields and publications (Tovar Viera, 2019b); (Tamela, 2019); (Pratiwi et al., 2021a), (Tocalo, 2021), (Wei et al., 2022). However, the investigation of comparing the rhetorical structure in research article (RA) abstracts in IT journals and Language, Literature, and Education (LLE) Journals are interesting to see the writers' awareness of following the procedures of writing an abstract.

This study aims to compare the rhetorical moves in the abstracts of IT journals and Language, Literature, and Education (LLE) Journals to identify the move structures and their occurrence as well as the similarities and differences. Moreover, this research aims to deepen our understanding of procedures and to see how obedient the writer in following rules of writing abstracts so that readers are easy to understand what the research articles are about.

Literature Review

Swales and Feak (2009) and Swales (1990) in (Nurcik et al., 2022) defined genre as a collection of discourses characterized by specific communicative purposes. Understanding genre involves recognizing how particular types of discourse and genres are structured and linguistically expressed to fulfill their communicative functions. As mentioned in (Kaya & Yağiz, 2020), abstracts encapsulate the entire article, from introduction to conclusion, within a concise framework, often regarded as a promotional summary of the article. Consequently, researchers must craft their abstracts with a persuasive tone that highlights the quality of their work. Cross and Oppenheim (2006) as indicated in (Galaidin & Bednárová-Gibová, 2023) stated that an abstract is a carefully structured and concise representation of a document. It must adhere to specific construction guidelines to effectively provide users with relevant information, enabling them to decide whether to access or understand the key points of the document. Various types of abstracts are designed to meet the diverse needs of users and serve different purposes. Among these, the most commonly used in abstracting and indexing services, as well as in academic journals, are indicative, informative, and a hybrid of the two, known as indicative-informative abstracts. Hyland (2005) in (Amnuai, 2019), highlights that the RA abstract is among the most extensively studied sections through move-based analysis. Serving as a crucial part of a journal article, the abstract encapsulates the core of the study and plays a key role in influencing whether readers continue engaging with the rest of the article. Consequently, authors should strive to structure their abstracts effectively, emphasizing their key arguments and presenting themselves as credible members of their scholarly community.

Biber et al. (2007) in (Adeyanju, 2023) explained that moves can be identified using two approaches: top-down and bottom-up. In the top-down approach, researchers begin by subjectively identifying the communicative purposes of the text, segmenting it into parts, and constructing move structures. They then examine the linguistic features to support the move analysis and identify specific steps. Conversely, the bottom-up approach starts with an objective analysis of linguistic features through text segmentation. Researchers then create moves and steps based on these features and later provide a description of the communicative purpose. According to Swales (2004) in (Alyousef, 2021), a "move" refers to a rhetorical or discoursal unit that serves a clear communicative purpose.

Identifying moves is a key step in rhetorical structure análisis. Research article abstracts in both hard sciences and soft sciences have been examined globally to uncover the rhetorical patterns used in abstract writing (Ramadhini et al., 2021; Tocalo, 2021). Move analysis has proven to be an effective method for examining genres, particularly given the complexities of research articles, including their abstracts (Pratiwi et al., 2021a).

Santos (1996) in (Nurhayati et al., 2022) analyzed 94 RA abstracts from applied linguistics using his model of five main moves: Situating the research (M1), Presenting the research (M2), Describing the methodology (M3), Summarizing the results (M4), Discussing the research (M5). M2 and M3 are obligatory moves in the genre, and different moves require different linguistic resources for thematization, tense, and voice. In addition, Hyland (2000) proposed a five-move structure: Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion. Swales and Feak (2004) suggested in their handbook that the structure of abstracts should include the same five elements as a paper, namely background, aim, method, results, and conclusion. According to these guidelines, a five model is a suggested structure of an abstract, even though the moves are labeled differently in different books.

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Research Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method to examine the move structures, their occurrence, as well as their similarities and differences. According to Bradshaw et al. (2017) as cited in (Doyle et al, 2020), a qualitative descriptive design may be deemed most appropriate as it recognises the subjective nature of the problem, the different experiences participants have and will present the findings in a way that directly reflects or closely resembles the terminology used in the initial research question.

For comparison purposes, two data sets were compiled from different journal categories: Informatics and Technology Journals, and Language, Literature, and Education Journals, all of which were SINTA 1 and 2 accredited and published between 2021 and 2024. The corpus included a total of 60 abstracts, with 30 abstracts from each journal category. The abstracts were randomly selected and analyzed using Hyland's (2000) classification of rhetorical moves (introduction, purpose, method, product, and conclusion) to assess move structures. Hyland's five-move model was preferred over the four-move classification (introduction, method, result, conclusion/discussion) used in some other studies (e.g., Samraj, 2005) to clarify the introduction and purpose. Any additional moves identified in the data were also incorporated into the analysis**.**

Below is Hyland's (2000) five-move model of move structures used for analyzing the data.

Table 1. Classification and function of moves (Hyland 2000)

Moves	**Function**
1. Introduction	Estalibshes context of the paper and motivates the research or discussion.
2. Purpose	Indicates purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper.
3. Method	Provides information on design, procedures, assumptions, approach, data, etc.
4. Product	States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished.
5. Conclusion	Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications.

Source: Hyland, K. (2000). ***Disciplinary Discourses: Social interactions in academic writing***. London: Longman.

In this study, the moves are categorized as M1 (Introduction), M2 (Purpose), M3 (Method), M4 (Product), and M5 (Conclusion). A table was created to facilitate the analysis of move structures and their occurrences. The classification of moves followed Kanoksilapatham's (2005) criteria as outlined in (Tovar Viera, 2019b) where a move is classified as obligatory if it occurs 100% of the time, conventional if it appears between 60% and 99% of the time, and optional if it occurs in less than 60% of cases.

Results and Discussion

Table 2. The Frequency of the Types of the Move Structures of both Journals.

No	IT Journals		LLE Journals	
	Move structure	*f*	Move Structures	*f*
1	M1-M2-M3-M4-M5	9	M1-M2-M3-M5	1
2	M1-M3-M2-M4-M5	1	M2-M1-M3-M4	1
3	M1-M2+M3-M4-M5	1	M1-M2-M3-M4	5
4	M1-M2-M3-M5-M4	3	M1-M2-M3-M4-M5	9
5	M2-M1-M4-M5-M3	1	M2-M3-M4-M5	6

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6	M1-M2-M3-M4	6	M2-M3-M2-M4-M5	1
7	M1-M2-M3-M5	1	M2-M1-M3-M4-M5	1
8	M1-M2+M3-M4	4	M2-M1+M2-M3-M4-M5	1
9	M1-M3-M2-M4	1	M1-M2+M3-M4	1
10	M2-M1-M3-M4	1	M2-M3-M2-M3-M4-M5	1
11	M1-M2-M4	1	M1-M2-M3-M1-M2-M4	1
12	M1-M2-M3	1	M1-M3-M2-M4-M5	1
13			M2-M3-M4-M2	1
	Total	**30**	**Total**	**30**

Table 2 shows that there were some structural variations between the two different journal scopes. The same move structures and occurrence numbers were found in both journal scopes: M1-M2-M3-M4-M5, M1-M3-M2-M4-M5, M1-M2-M3-M5, M2-M1-M3-M4, and M1-M2+M3-M4. However, the frequency of M1-M2-M3-M4 differed. The unique patterns, which contrast with the most common structure, were also discovered, indicating that abstract writers have their way of creating the structure.

Both published journal scopes show a primary move structure of M1-M2-M3-M4-M5, the most common move in abstract analysis. Because it differs significantly from previous research findings, the author attempts to understand how Move 5 forms, which frequently manifests as an intriguing abstract pattern. As cited in (Nurhayati et al., 2022), Santos (1996) discovered that all abstracts contain Moves 2 and 3: presenting the research, applying the methodology, and summarizing the findings (Move 4); furthermore, Pho (2008), nearly all abstracts contain a study presentation (Move 2), a methodological description (Move 3), and a summary of the findings (Move 4). (Tamela, 2021) found I-P-M-R (M1-M2-M3-M4) mostly in SCOPUS indexed Journals,, and it aligns with (Alyousef, 2021). However, the movement pattern findings in this study differ from those reported by Santos (1996) and Pho (2008) and (Tamela, 2019). According to (Hyland, 2004), the conclusion movement has a tendency to emerge in abstracts, which corresponds to the movement's emergence.

According to Table 2, the M1-M2-M3-M4 structure represents the positions of the two most common motions. The study found that the two most common types of move structures are M1-M2-M3-M4-M5 and M1-M2-M3-M4, as indicated by the presence of an introduction in abstracts. (Hyland, 2002) defines the preliminary step (M1) as establishing the writer's context and motivation for the research or debate. This implies that the author's use of the abstract is necessary to provide context for their research. An introduction move may indicate that the soft field domain lacks a well-defined problem set. Discipline differences can be linked to a desire for Introduction moves among writers in the peaceful domain.

Furthermore, Hyland (2004) cited in (Nurhayati et al., 2022) notes that abstracts often align more closely with the Introduction move. Typically, each move within an abstract is expressed in a separate sentence, following a common structure of M1-M2-M3-M4-M5, where each move occupies its sentence. However, this study also discovered that the moves listed in Table 2 are accompanied by a plus symbol (+). This symbol indicates that two moves are combined within a single sentence. Thus, this research suggests that movements can be conveyed in various forms, including merging multiple movements into one sentence.

Certain abstracts show a merging of moves, as illustrated by structures like M1-M2+M3-M4-M5, M1-M2+M3-M4, and M2-M1+M2-M3-M4-M5. In the first two structures, M2 and M3 are combined in a single sentence, while in the third, M1 and M2 are merged. The M1-M2-M3-M4-M5 structure is the most common, appearing in nine out of 30 abstracts across both journal categories, consistent with Hyland's (2000) findings. The M1-M2-M3-M4 structure is the second most frequent, appearing in six IT journal abstracts and five language, literature, and education journal abstracts. Interestingly, the M2-M3-M4-M5 structure appeared six times in language, literature, and education journals but was absent in IT journals. Move 1 (Introduction) was present in all IT journal abstracts. Notably, 21 abstracts—13 from the former journal category and eight from the latter—lack M5, deviating from Hyland's recommendation.

Additionally, other structural variations were identified in both journal categories. Some

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abstracts displayed non-sequential move structures, with six abstracts showing patterns like M2-M1-M3-M4, M2-M1-M3-M4-M5, M2-M1+M2-M3-M4-M5, and M1-M3-M2-M4-M5. There were also repetitions of moves in three abstracts, such as M2-M3-M2-M3-M4-M5, M2-M3-M2-M4-M5, and M1-M2-M3-M1-M2-M4. These repeated occurrences of M2 suggest that writers may lack awareness of redundancy or the need to merge repeated moves.

The analysis of move patterns in these abstracts indicates that the M1-M2-M3-M4-M5 sequence is the most common among writers. While the formation of the Introduction and Conclusion moves in these abstracts differs from previous research (Tamela, 2019; Alyousef, 2021). Hyland (2004) observed a trend toward the increasing presence of these movements.

2. Move Occurrence

The rhetorical structure of the research paper was analyzed using Hyland's (2000) model. The results regarding the frequency of moves in both corpora are displayed in Table 4.

Table 3. The Move Occurrence of the RA Abstracts

IT Journals (IT)			**Language, Literature and Education Journals (LLE)**		
Move Type	**Total (n=30)**	**(%)**	**Move Type**	**Total (n=30)**	**(%)**
M1-Introduction	29	97	M1-Introduction	21	70
M2-Purpose	30	100	M2-Purpose	30	100
M3-Method	28	93	M3-Method	30	100
M4-Product	28	93	M4-Product	29	97
M5-Conclusion	16	53	M5-Conclusion	21	70

The analysis of move occurrence identifies which moves are obligatory, conventional, or optional. This classification follows Kanoksilapatham's (2005) criteria as cited in (Tovar Viera, 2019b), where a move is considered obligatory if it occurs 100% of the time, conventional if it appears in 60% to 99% of cases, and optional if it occurs in less than 60% of instances.

As shown in Table 3, Move 2 (Purpose) was identified as the obligatory move in IT journal abstracts, while in the other journal types, both Move 2 (Purpose) and Move 3 (Method) were identified as obligatory. In IT abstracts, the conventional moves included Move 1 (Introduction), Move 3 (Method), and Move 4 (Product). In contrast, the other journals' abstracts identified three different conventional moves: Move 1 (Introduction), Move 4 (Product), and Move 5 (Conclusion). In IT abstracts, only one move was classified as optional: Move 5 (Conclusion), with an occurrence rate of 53%.

According to (Hyland, 2000), Move 1 (Introduction) sets the context of the paper and explains the rationale behind the research or discussion. (Hyland, 2004) later noted that the use of the Introduction move has increased in article abstracts, particularly in the soft sciences, where authors need to provide readers with the context for their research.

Although the Introduction move was considered optional in soft disciplines, previous studies in these fields (e.g., Santos, 1996; Pho, 2008, Wei et al., 2022) also found it commonly used to open abstracts.This was not supported by (Alyousef, 2021; Gani and Kurniawan, 2021) finding that Move 1 as the conventional one. In contrast to earlier studies (Nurhayati et al, 2022, 29 abstracts in the IT corpus included Move 1 (Introduction), compared to 21 abstracts in the other corpus. This suggests that the Introduction move was deemed necessary for the abstracts. The trend of increasing use of the Introduction move in abstracts, as predicted by Hyland, was observed in both corpora. Specifically, 29 (97%) and 21 (70%) of the abstracts in both corpora included the Introduction, emphasizing its importance in providing readers with context for the studies.

(Hyland, 2000) describes the purpose move as outlining the paper's objective, purpose, thesis, or hypotheses. In this study, Move 2 was found to be obligatory in both journal types, with every article abstract containing a purpose move, as shown in Table 3. This indicates that including a purpose move is standard practice, aligning with the findings of (Tamela, 2019) in TEFLIN abstracts (Alyousef, 2021) in political science, (Gani&Kurniawan, 2022). This contrasts with (Tovar Viera,

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2019b) classification, where the purpose move was considered conventional rather than obligatory.

According to (Hyland, 2000), the Method move provides details on the design, methods, assumptions, approach, data, and so on. In this study, the Method move was commonly used. It appeared 28 times (93%) in the IT corpus, where it was classified as a conventional move. In contrast, Move 3 was categorized as obligatory in the LLE corpus, as shown in Table 3. The amount of information provided in the Method move was relatively small when combined with the Product move, resulting in a more concise presentation of data and methods. The analysis of the Purpose move highlighted the presence of the Method move, observed as M2+M3 in both corpora. This suggests that including the Method move is a standard practice, similar to the Purpose move. These findings align with studies by (Tovar Viera, 2019b) in Ecuadorian and American corpora, (Tamela, 2019) and (Alyousef, 2021)). However, they contradict findings from (Pratiwi et al. 2019) and (Li & Pramoolsook, 2015) (Wei, 2022) in RA abstracts, where the Method move was categorized as optional.

(Hyland, 2000) describes the fourth or Product move as presenting the main conclusions, findings, cases, or achievements. In this study, the Product move was prevalent. As indicated in Table 3, it appeared in 28 abstracts (98%) in the IT corpus and 29 abstracts (97%) in the LLE corpus, and it was classified as a conventional move. These results, where the Product move was considered obligatory, align with findings from (Alyousef, 2021; Wei et al., 2022, Tamela, 2019 and Tovar Viera, 2019b). This contrasts with (Pratiwi et al. 2021) in thesis abstracts, where the Product move was categorized as optional.

These findings align with Hyland's (2000) description of the Conclusion move (Move 5) as a method for analyzing or extending results beyond the article's scope, drawing conclusions, and suggesting applications or broader implications. In the IT corpus, Move 5 appeared 16 times and was classified as optional, consistent with Tamela (2019), (Tovar Viera, 2019a) and (Alyousef, 2021) in RA abstracts, and (Pratiwi et al., 2021b) in Thesis and Dissertation Abstracts.

Conclusion

This study examined the rhetorical structures in 60 abstracts from two distinct accredited journal categories: Informatics and Technology (IT) Journals and Language, Literature, and Education (LLE) Journals. Using Hyland's five-move model, the analysis revealed 19 different organizational move patterns. Of these, six abstracts shared the same move structures but with varying frequencies, while 13 move structures appeared in diverse patterns. The most common move structure across both journal types was M1-M2-M3-M4-M5, followed by M1-M2-M3-M4. Specific abstracts demonstrated merged moves, such as M1-M2+M3-M4-M5, M1-M2+M3-M4, and M2-M1+M2-M3-M4-M5.

Variations included non-sequential move structures and repetitions of Moves 2 and 3 in both journal types, suggesting that M2, which shows the purpose, was often repeated due to a lack of awareness among writers. In contrast, in LLE journals, Purpose and Method Moves were obligatory, while Introduction and Conclusion Moves were conventional. This difference indicates that the average awareness of using all move structures was higher in LLE (93%) compared to IT abstracts (87%).

The findings of this study offer educational value and insights into the relationship between rhetorical structures and linguistic forms, as well as relevant examples, by employing a genre-based approach and authentic samples. Hyland's (2000) five-move model can be useful in ensuring consistency in the overall organization of abstracts by highlighting the importance of each move and their sequence. The study revealed that some structures contained repeated or cyclical moves, suggesting the need for detailed textual guidance on the proper sequence of moves.

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