How Do Novice and Experienced Indonesian Authors Rhetorically Organize Research Article Introduction?

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ABSTRACT

Research article introduction, among other sections, plays a pivotal role in illuminating the significance of the research topic being investigated and in situating the contribution of the research to the body of knowledge in the field. A quality introduction can determine the successful publication process in international journals. Genre analysis through move analysis, therefore, has generated several models to organize the introduction section rhetorically well. However, little attention is devoted to exploring the introduction written by novice and experienced authors. Hence, this study aims to examine the similarities and discrepancies of rhetorical organization of introduction sections written by both groups in Indonesian context. Eight journal article introductions were analyzed by using Swales' (2004) revised creating a Research Space model. The moves and steps were analysed, followed by analysing the linguistic realizations of the introductions. The findings revealed that both novice and experienced Indonesian authors manifested the three moves, i.e. Move 1, Establishing a territory; Move 2, establishing a niche; and Move 3, presenting the present work. However, experienced authors were more aware of indicating the gap than novice counterparts before presenting their works in the step level. The realizations of some linguistic features (i.e. tense, voice, hedging, and citation patterns) were further discussed between both groups. This study concludes that the authors' expertise with international publication partly affects the quality of their introduction. Pedagogical implication and recommendation for future research are also presented.

Keywords: Expertise, introduction, novice, research article, rhetorical moves

1. INTRODUCTION

In the realm of academia, the importance of having good command of writing research articles is in line with the urgency of elevating international publication among lecturers and scholars. International publication rate is still believed to be one of the indicators to measure the productivity and contribution to the institutions (Suherdi, Kurniawan, & Lubis, 2020). It is also an indicator of academic success because of several reasons. First, successful publication in international journals can foster financial prosperity through getting incentives from the government or institution. Second, it can advance the institution's reputation (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). Third, the authors can gain promotion or international recognition that enables them to collaborate with other scholars from other countries.

Of all sections, the introduction plays a crucial role in proving the background and rationale for the article to be published in the international journals. The introduction is conceptualized as a place for informing the research intent, establishing the niche, and presenting the research objectives (Swales & Najjar, 1987). According to American Psychological Association (2019) quality introduction should have three elements: importance of the research problem, historical antecedents, and statement of the study goals. Research article introduction is also used as an indicator by the journal reviewers to measure the contribution or novelty of the research to the body of knowledge in the field, especially for the target journal. Hence, it is not surprising that academic investigation on the eligible structure of research article introduction keeps being conducted by many researchers of English for academic purposes.

Genre analysis through move analysis is believed to be a helpful approach to understand the complexity of writing research article introduction. Move analysis is related to the exploration of rhetorical organization of a genre, which fundamentally consists of communicative functions (moves) and sub-communicative functions (steps) (Swales, 1990, 2004). The move-step boundaries are determined by the words signalling the communicative and sub-communicative functions. Therefore, move analysis centers on the exploration of consensus and variations in performing a particular genre.

Move analysis of the research article introduction was firstly coined by the prominent linguist John M Swales who investigated the way research article introduction is rhetorically organized in 1981 and generated a seminal model of analysis so-called Creating A Research Space. The model was later revised by him in 2004. In the last few years, a considerable body of research has been conducted to reveal the complexity of writing research article introduction. Tessuto (2015) investigated 90 research articles from three international reputable journals. The findings showed that Move 1 Establishing a territory and Move 3 Presenting the present work were found to be obligatory. Meanwhile, Move 2 Establishing a niche was considered conventional with 69% of occurrence. The findings also delineated that the introduction was typically started with Move 1 and concluded by Move 3. Öztürk (2018) examined the rhetorical organization of 50 research article introductions from five international journals. The findings slightly contrasted to Tessuto's (2015) study where Move 2 Establishing a niche was found to be obligatory. Apart from that, this study reinforced the typical Move 1-Move 2-Move 3 patterns with the occurrence of cyclicity of Move 1 and Move 2 or Move 1 and Move 3. Rahman, Darus, and Amir (2017) analyzed 20 research article introductions taken from four leading journals in the field of Applied Linguistics. Similar to Tessuto (2015), they found that establishing a territory and presenting the present work were obligatory moves. On the other hand, establishing a niche, albeit not obligatory, was found to be conventionally manifested with 85% of occurrence in their corpus.

In the step level, the previous research (Öztürk, 2018; Rahman et al., 2017; Tessuto, 2015) conformed that making topic generalizations was typical to convey Move 1. Indicating a gap was more preferable than presenting positive justification to convey Move 2. Announcing present research descriptively or purposively was manifested more than the other steps to inform Move 3, followed by presenting the research questions or hypothesis (if any).

Although the rhetorical organization of research article introduction has been examined quite extensively, little is known about the way novice and experienced authors organize their research article introductions rhetorically. The evidence of linguistic features realized by both groups is also under-explored. Hence, this study aims to address the gap by analyzing and comparing research article introductions written by novice and experienced authors in the Indonesian context. The following research questions drive this study.

1. How do novice and experienced Indonesian authors rhetorically organize their research article introductions?

2. How are the rhetorical moves linguistically realized by both groups of authors?

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study was part of a more extensive study on the comparison between the Indonesian authors' understanding of writing the introduction section and the textual evidence from their best published papers. This study was designed as a qualitative research using genre analysis method through move analysis (Baker, 2010; Hyland, 2009; Swales, 1990). It was intended to capture the similarities and differences between novice and experienced Indonesian authors' research article introductions regarding the manifestation of rhetorical moves along with their linguistic realizations.

2.2. Data Sources

The data were taken from research article introductions written by Indonesian authors. Of forty lecturers in a public university in Bandung, eight (n=8) lecturers were selected. While four lecturers were considered novice authors, the other four lecturers were considered experienced authors. The division of the lecturers into two groups was based on the authors' experiences in publishing papers in international journals. Those who have published at least one research article in a Scopus-indexed journal are considered to be experienced while those who have not are considered to be novice. The corpus contained 5778 words with an average 722 words.

2.3. Data Collection

The data collection process started with asking for permission to all eight selected authors. The researchers searched for their best published papers using Google Scholar. Once all papers were collected, the introduction was copied and pasted in a separated Word file to ease the analysis process. Each file consists of the title page and the introduction.

2.4. Data Analysis

Before the main data set was analyzed, an online meeting was conducted to synchronize all researchers' understanding of genre analysis particularly move analysis, research article writing, and rhetorical conventions of research article introduction. After that, Swales' (2004) revised version of Creating A Research Space (CARS) analysis model was used to analyze the data (see Figure 1). The reason is that this model covers a comprehensive description of move-step patterns of research article introduction. Another session was conducted in which the first and second researchers were assigned to analyze a sample text (each of them), followed by the provision of feedback from the sixth researcher whose expertise is on move analysis.
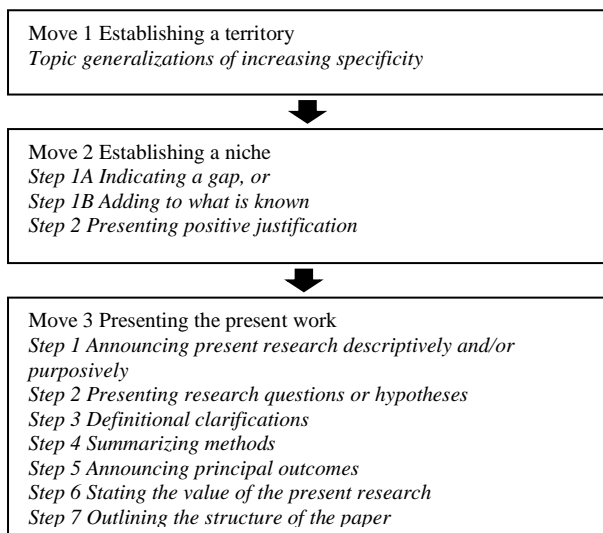
Move 1 Establishing a territory
Topic generalizations of increasing specificity

Move 2 Establishing a niche
Step 1A Indicating a gap, or
Step 1B Adding to what is known
Step 2 Presenting positive justification

Move 3 Presenting the present work
Step 1 Announcing present research descriptively and/or purposively
Step 2 Presenting research questions or hypotheses
Step 3 Definitional clarifications
Step 4 Summarizing methods
Step 5 Announcing principal outcomes
Step 6 Stating the value of the present research
Step 7 Outlining the structure of the paper

Figure 1 Revised model of Creating A Research Space

The sentences were the units of analysis. Each introduction was first broken down into sentences, which were moved to a table to ease the analysis process. The title, abstract, and introduction of the paper were read to get familiar with the content. Afterwards, the top-down analysis stage was done by labelling each sentence with a step. The steps were classified into the appropriate moves based on the analysis model. Once done, the bottom-up analysis stage was done by highlighting the linguistic features of the moves, including verb tense, sentence voice, hedging, and citation practices. The next stage involved the comparison to get similarities and differences between the rhetorical moves of introductions written by novice and experienced Indonesian authors. Last but not least, the analysis results were checked by the other researchers to maintain its trustworthiness.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To keep the confidentiality of personal information of the authors, the attributes used in all excerpts were: RAI (Research Article Introduction), number, step, and novice or experienced.

3.1. Rhetorical Moves of the Introduction

The analysis results showed that all introductions employed three-move configuration, i.e. establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and presenting the present work; regardless of the novice and experienced division. The following sub-sections describe the manifestation of each move and step in details.

Table 1. Moves and steps manifested in the introduction

Move-step category	Novice authors	Experienced authors
	f (%) n=4	f (%) n=4
Move 1	100	100
Move 2	100	100
Step 1A	0	100
Step 1B	75	25
Step 2	75	25
Move 3	100	100
Step 1	50	100
Step 2	25	0
Step 3	50	50
Step 4	25	25
Step 5	25	25
Step 6	25	25
Step 7	0	0

3.1.1. Move 1 - Establishing a Territory

This move occurred 100% in both novice and experienced authors' research article introductions. The authors conveyed this move for several purposes. First, it was intended to introduce the research topic being investigated. Second, it was intended to underscore the reason why researching the topic was worth doing. Third, some authors aimed to highlight that the research topic was of great importance and interest among scholars in the field of study.

In higher education, the issues of student satisfaction have been a great concern among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. (RA3, Novice)

The end of the New Order in Indonesia has seen an increase in awareness and recognition of children's rights and education which in turn has stimulated the production of literature and films for children. (RA3, Experienced)

3.1.2. Move 2 - Establishing a Niche

This move also appeared 100% in both novice and experienced authors' research article introductions. Differences were evident in the step level. The novice authors preferred to explain more information about what is known from previous literature or research (75%). It was usually followed by the presentation of positive justification (75%) to reinforce that the topic being investigated in their studies was valuable. On the contrary, the experienced authors manifested this move by indicating the gap identified in the existing literature or previous research (100% of occurrence). Their counterparts did not manifest this step at all (0% of occurrence).

There have been many studies on the topics of motivation, interest, and learning outcomes. (RA3, Novice)

Studies of subjectivity in Indonesian children's literature are almost non-existent, let alone studies of glocal subjectivity in Indonesian children's films. (RA3, Experienced)

3.1.3. Move 3 - Presenting the Present Work

This move also occurred 100% in both novice and experienced authors' research article introductions. Similarities and differences were identified in the step level. Both groups were in common regarding the less occurrence of Step 3 Definitional clarifications, Step 4 Summarizing methods, Step 5 Announcing principal outcomes, and Step 6 Stating the value of the present research (50%, 25%, 25%, 25% respectively in both groups).

The brake system discusses the understanding of the brake system, the working principle of the brake system…. (RA2, Novice)

These DNA sequences are presented in all prokaryotes and have been used to determine the taxonomic diversity or bacterial community structure qualitatively in an ecosystem [7, 8]. (RA4, Experienced)

However, the experienced authors exemplified Step 1 present research descriptive or purposively more than the novice authors (100% and 50%, respectively). The novice authors manifested Step 2 Presenting research questions or hypotheses more than the experienced authors (50% and 0%, respectively).

Based on our previous studies in the development of a system for analysing the lighting for many purposes [23, 26-31], the purpose of this report is to analyse the optimal illuminance level based on standardized lighting. (RA1, Step 1, Experienced)

Students who do not really have skills in arts will have to have high interest and motivation in order to pass the class. Hence, it will be interesting to see the extent to which their learning outcomes in this subject are influenced by motivation and interest in learning arts. (RA4, Step 2, Novice)

The findings show that the Indonesian authors have exemplified a conformity to manifest all three moves in their introductions. The obligatory status of Move 1 Establishing a territory and Move 3 Presenting the present work echoes with previous research (Öztürk, 2018; Rahman, Darus, & Amir, 2017; Tessuto, 2015). This indicates that the authors have been aware of the objective of the introduction to inform the research and intent and introduce the present research. The reason for this may be the authors' academic writing repertoire. Since they are all lecturers, their experiences in writing undergraduate and master theses and their engagement with writing other types of academic writing have enriched their understanding of the basic principles of writing an introduction. However, the obligatory status of Move 2 Establishing a niche does not conform to Tessuto's (2015) study. This might be caused by the differing number of corpus analysed.

The findings also reveal that significant differences are evident in the step level between the novice and experienced Indonesian authors. While the former group of authors prefers Step 1B Adding to what is known and Step 2 Presenting positive justification to establish a niche, the latter group of authors is concerned with the statement of gap. This indicates that the experienced authors attempt to convince the readers that their research is novel and contributing to the body of knowledge in the field because they highlight the gap being addressed in their studies. This confirms previous research (Öztürk, 2018; Rahman et al., 2017; Tessuto, 2015) that Step 1A indicating a gap occurs more than the other steps. The reason for this pertains to the nature of publishing papers in international journals where the authors are expected to bring novelty in their research so that the impact factor of the journal can be elevated.

3.2. Linguistic Realizations of the Moves

This sub-section focuses on verb tense, sentence voice, metadiscourse, and citation practices to realize the rhetorical moves.

Regarding the verb tense, the novice and experienced Indonesian authors preferred to use present tenses such as simple present tense and present perfect tense to convey the three rhetorical moves. Variations were identified such as the use of simple past tense and present continuous tense to inform the topic generalization to increase specificity. One notable difference affected by the expertise of the writers was

that future tense was only used in the introductions written by novice authors.

Similarly, there was no convincing evidence of the influence of expertise on the realization of sentence voice in the moves. Although active and passive voices were identified, the former was more dominant than the latter one in conveying Move 1 Establishing a territory and Move 2 Establishing a niche.

Metadiscoursal units of the moves particularly encompassed the interactional resources (Hyland, 2004). Hedges were dominantly used in conveying Move 1 Establishing a territory and Move 2 Establishing a niche. The most frequently occurred types of hedging were modal verbs "can", "wil", "may", "should", "must", followed by adverbs "usually", "almost", "often", "considerably", "possibly", "most" and verbs "seem" and "suggest". Two differences were evident between the novice and experienced authors' introductions. First, more modal verbs were used to present the ideas about the present work among novice authors than experienced writers. Second, boosters occurred only in the novice writers' introductions such as adjectives "important", "positive", "interesting" and adverbs "very", "truly", "greatly".

In terms of citation practices (Swales, 1986), similarities and differences were also noticed. On the one hand, integral and non-integral citation styles occurred in both groups' introductions to convey Move 1 Establishing a territory and Move 2 Establishing a niche. On the other hand, the novice authors preferred the use of non-integral citation style to inform the justification of the significance of the topic being investigated and the description of what is known from previous literature or research. They did not include any references in presenting their works, as the experienced authors did.

Previous research (Öztürk, 2018; Rahman et al., 2017; Tessuto, 2015) also states that there is no consensus in terms of how the rhetorical moves are linguistically realized. However, it is justified that active voice is more preferable than passive voice as in Tessuto's (2015) study. Regarding the academic citation style, the findings corroborate Mansourizadeh and Ahmad's (2011) study that both integral and non-integral citation styles are identified in their corpus. However, the novice authors in the present study prefer non-integral citation style than the experienced authors do, contrasting to Mansourizadeh and Ahmad's (2011) study. They found that the expert writers used non-integral citations in their introductions. This might be caused by the differing culture of academic writing across countries in which the authors involved in their study are from a research university in Malaysia. Hence, further investigation on this issue across cultural contexts is worth taking.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has compared the rhetorical organization of research article introduction written by novice and experienced Indonesian authors. The findings reveal that all introductions have manifested all moves: Move 1 Establishing a territory, Move 2 Establishing a niche, and Move 3 Presenting the present work. However, in the step level, the experienced authors were more aware of pointing out the research novelty by indicating the gap of previous research than their counterparts. The novice authors were more preferable to keep highlighting the importance of researching the topic by providing positive justification from previous research or adding knowledge in the field of study. Regarding the linguistic realizations, no significant difference exists in the introductions of both groups; despite several differing preferences on using hedges and citation styles. This study concludes that the authors' expertise with international publication partly affects the quality of their introduction.

This study suggests materials development of English for research publication purposes. The materials need to encompass mainly the significance of conveying Move 2 through Step 1 Indicating a gap to highlight the research novelty as well as the typical linguistic features in realizing all moves and steps properly. Moreover, this study suggests more investigation on the influence of journal's indexation on the rigidity level of expecting the authors to get the paper's structure conformed to a particular model.

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