

# Abstract Thesis Analysis in Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching Fields

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**Abstract**—Not all abstracts written by students are in accordance with systematic abstract in a related field of science. In fact, abstracts are the main and important part in the description of the contents of a scientific work so the reader becomes interested in continuing his reading. This article aims to describe the variation of rhetoric in thesis abstracts from three related fields, namely linguistics, literature, and language teaching. This research method uses a descriptive analysis approach from 30 thesis abstracts in the past year. The five rhetoric models of Swales and his colleagues were chosen as an analytical framework for rhetorical structures. The results of this study, the abstract of language teaching and linguistic fields have five stages in the presentation of the abstract, while the literary field is only four moves. However, move 1 and move 5 of the three fields are in the optional classification, except in the literary field there is no other move. Move 2 (purpose) is categorized as conventional, move 3 (methodology) and move 4 (result) as obligatory, and move 1 (introduction) and move 5 (conclusion) as optional. In general, the move pattern used in this thesis abstract is 3 move patterns (move 2, move 3 and move 4). It can be concluded that the majority of students uses the three move pattern in writing Indonesian language abstract in their thesis.

**Keywords**—abstract thesis; rhetorical structure; discipline variation; genre

## I. INTRODUCTION

Abstract is one of the attributes of the most important part of a student's thesis in both Indonesian and English. In addition, abstracts are general and important information in the content of the thesis so the reader will be more interested or not in the thesis written by the researcher [1,2]. Sometimes, the abstract part is read by students as a reference or recommendation to other students in writing a thesis or in finding research ideas. However, in reality there are still some students who are still less skilled in writing a thesis abstract. These problems are caused by the lack of reading the guidebook properly, abstracts based on existing abstracts in the thesis, and abstracts that are less of a concern for the thesis supervisor or examiner [2].

Most college students in Indonesia found great difficulty in writing abstracts in English even though they were used to write abstracts in Indonesian when writing theses, research reports, scientific articles and others in Indonesian [3]. One of the reasons, according to Suharno, is that students come from different disciplines and the standard format of abstract writing

differs from one discipline to another. This study refers to three related fields, namely linguistics, literature, and language teaching which allow for a difference in the rhetoric of abstract writing.

There are at least five functions of abstract research article journal, they are 1) as a miniature article containing topics, methods and research findings; 2) as a tool to select articles that will be read later by the reader; 3) as a full article preview and a road map or article track record for readers; 4) as a tool to index published scientific works for professional abstract writers and editors; and 5) for article reviewers, abstracts can provide an initial description of an article that will be reviewed or corrected [4]. However, in this case, students as writers still very rarely pay attention to abstract writing based on its function. In fact, the abstract they wrote in Indonesian when it was going to be published in a journal would be translated into English.

Abstract research journal articles published in international English-language journals usually contain five steps: Stage-1 (background or introduction), Stage-2 (research objectives), Stage-3 (research method), Stage-4 (research results or findings) and Stages-5 (discussion and conclusions) [5]. Therefore, the author focuses on the five moves in writing rhetoric of the related fields.

Some previous research on disciplinary variation in abstracts of research articles can be seen. However, abstract studies from two related disciplines are still limited, as this study aims to explore abstract rhetorical movements in the fields of linguistics and applied linguistics by investigating 200 abstracts published between 2009-2012 [6]. The findings show that there are three conventional movements in the abstract in linguistics, while there are four conventional movements in the abstract in applied linguistics. This finding has significant pedagogical implications for academic writing for beginner writers in two disciplines

The same thing that abstracts are important to focus on the rhetorical aspects of the text used to create different types of discourse [7]. In fact, the abstract part of a scientific article has a rhetorically defined structural framework that is very often culturally specific. This study aims to investigate abstract parts of articles written by British and Persian authors, to explore whether they follow the same structural pattern. For this purpose, an abstract corpus of 60 English and Persian

languages, each of thirty, was chosen randomly from the British ISI journals and Iranian scientific journals and analyzed based on the IMRD framework introduced by Swales [8]. Findings from this study reveal that most English and Persian writers use the IMRD model in their abstract structure; though, the frequency of occurrence of each movement is different. In the case of moving sequences, all patterns used were analyzed and I-M-R-D and I-M-R were identified as the patterns most frequently used in both groups. The findings of this study may have implications for Iranian writers who are trying to publish their studies in leading international journals. This reference framework of research theorists is used as the basis for the authors in analyzing corpus data abstracts of thesis Indonesian undergraduate education students.

## II. METHOD

This research was a descriptive research with content analysis approach. Descriptive research is a method to collect data in the group of people, an object, a set of conditions and other in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study [9,10]. Content analysis is a method that was applied to written or visual materials for identifying the specified characteristics of material [11]. The data of this research was abstract in the field of teaching language, linguistics, and literature in 2017 with each of them 10 abstracts, so all the abstracts made as corpus in this study amounted to 30 abstracts. Data collection techniques used documentation in the 2017 student thesis by grouping them into three disciplines which consisted of the field of language teaching, linguistics, and literature. The data analysis techniques in this study were identification, coding, tabulation, interpretation, and conclusion.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The rhetorical moves of the abstracts were analyzed divided into five moves, namely introduction, purpose, methodology, result, and conclusion. The result of the abstract analysis was in the below.

TABLE I. RHETORICAL MOVES IN THE THESES ABSTRACT

No.	Moves	Frequency of Moves			Percentage	Category
		Linguistics	Literature	Language Teaching		
1.	Move 1 Introduction	1	-	1	6,7%	Optional
2.	Move 2 Purpose	9	9	10	93%	Conventional
3.	Move 3 Methodology	10	10	10	100%	Obligatory
4.	Move 4 Result	10	10	10	100%	Obligatory
5.	Move 5 Conclusion	3	5	1	30%	Optional

Based on table 1, it can be observed that from 30 abstracts in the fields of linguistics, literature, and language teaching, namely the teaching and linguistics fields, there are five stages in the presentation of the abstract, while the literary field is only four moves. However, move one and five of these three

fields are in the optional classification, except in the literary field there is no other move.

From table 1, it can be seen that move 3 and move 4 are found in all abstracts (100%) in the obligatory classification. This can be seen in the move 3 abstract example and move 4.

The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method. The subject of this study was one Indonesian teacher who taught in Class VIII of Pondok Kelapa Middle School, Bengkulu Tengah Regency. Data collection techniques use observation and interviews. The data analysis technique used was Miles and Huberman which included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. Test the validity of the data using data using a credibility test conducted by triangulation. (P1)

Move 3

The results showed that the teacher had implemented one core competency / spiritual attitude through pronunciation and greeting answers, praying together, praying at school, and protecting the environment around the school. The two core competencies / social attitudes are integrated through group learning activities, not cheating or plagiarism, speaking outwardly, working on and collecting tasks on time, obeying the school rules, carrying out individual tasks well, daring to appear in class, being responsible and accepting risks from actions taken, memormato older people, not feel opinion, help each other to achieve mutual success, play an active role, ask questions, answer, not give up, dare to try, reject the opinions of others with courtesy, and apply the attitude of greeting smile greet others. (P1)

Move 4

From table 1 above it can be seen that move 2 is also almost found in all abstracts (93%) in the conventional classification. This can be seen in the move 2 abstract example below.

The purpose of this study was to describe the illocutionary speech acts of Indonesian language teachers in the learning process in Class XI Science 1 state senior high school no. 9 Bengkulu City. (L2)

Move 2

From table 1, it can also be seen that move 1 and move 5 are not all in the abstract (move 1, which is 6.7% and move 5, which is 30%) in the optional classification. This can be seen in the move 1 and move 5 abstract examples below.

There is a relationship between listening and speaking skills in Indonesian learning in Class VIII of SMP 5 Kota Bengkulu. (P6)

Move 1

Based on the results of this study it can be suggested that further research be carried out with the object of research in the form of discourse in opinion, education or economic rubrics so that clearly visible differences in cohesion and coherence contained in this type of discourse as well as variations in the use of types of cohesion and coherence. (L8)

Move 5

In addition to the move rhetoric described above, there are some findings of researchers in the rhetoric of the move in this student thesis. They are an inappropriate move sequence and an inappropriate explanation of the move. Move sequences that are not appropriate, for example S4 abstract, namely move 3, move 2, and move 4. Content in the move is not appropriate, especially on move 1 and move 5. Move 1 for example in the abstracts L7, L8, and L9 which are still statements. Whereas in move 1 it should contain an argument or problem in one sentence. Move 5 is also still in the form of advice, not at the conclusion / discussion / significance of research findings. Only one abstract that moves 5 has a conclusion, as in the abstracts S1 and S6.

Conclusions from this study that the social picture of the community in the Widow's Anovel illustrates the life of a husband who is a bastard against his wife, but wants to turn into a good person when he is left dead by his wife. (S6)

Move 5

As mentioned previously, all of the 30 abstracts in the corpus were analyzed five move model for their rhetorical patterns. Table 2 summarizes the result of the analysis of Indonesian Program Undergraduate RA abstracts.

TABLE II. RHETORICAL MOVES PATTERN

No.	Pattern	Frequency			Percentage
		Linguistics	Literature	Language Teaching	
1	4 Moves	3	5	3	37%
2	3 Moves	7	3	8	60%
3	2 Moves	-	1	-	3%
Total		30			100%

Based on table 1 above, it can be seen that from 30 abstracts in the fields of linguistics, literature, and language teaching, the dominant literary field is 4 moves, but this literary field also has only 2 moves. The field of linguistics and language teaching with the same frequency on these 4 moves. However, the 3 moves in the field of linguistics and language teaching are more dominant, while the literary field is less dominant.

Table 2 shows that 18 abstracts (60%) are found as 3 moves pattern. Here is the example of the use 3 move pattern taken from the data of the study.

The purpose of this study is to describe the form of violations of the principle of cooperative conversation in the Mata Najwa program on Metro TV. (L3)

Move 2

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. The data in this study are in the form of speech from Najwa Shihab and the speakers. Data collection techniques use documentation techniques. Data analysis techniques in this study were carried out through steps. The validity of the data used is a credibility test that is carried out by increasing the persistence of the supervisor during coaching and discussion with colleagues. (L3)

Move 3

The results of the study found violations of the principle of conversation cooperation with 75 utterances with single maximal violations and 26 utterances with violations of multiple maxims with underlying factors, namely the context of language use and language modesty. The violation of a single maxim is in the form of a) violation of the quality maxim; b) violation of quantity maxim; c) violation of the maxim of relevance; d) violation of the maximum method. The violation of double maxim is in the form of a) violation of the maxim of quality and quantity; b) violation of the maxim of quantity and maxim of relevance; c) violation of the maxim of quantity and maximization of methods; d) violation of the maxim of relevance and maxim of method; e) violation of the quantity maxim, maxim of relevance, and maximization of method. (L3)

Move 4

Table 2 shows that 11 abstracts (37%) are found as 4 moves pattern. Here is the example of the use 4 move pattern taken from the data of the study.

The purpose of this study was to (1) describe the events that happened to the main female characters in shaping and influencing her mental aspects in the Second Life novel by MD Aminudin; (2) describe the psychiatric aspects of the main character. (S3)

Move 2

The method used is descriptive qualitative method with a psychological approach and expressive theory from MH Abrams. Data collection through synopsis, biographical analysis of authors, identifying events, identifying intrinsic elements, analyzing psychological aspects, and drawing conclusions. (S3)

Move 3

As for the results of the data analysis, there were several events that formed the main character's nobility: 1) the discovery of a strange disease in the main character and the drug was not found; 2) the main character's inequality with family; 3) reduced compassion; 4) accepting to be an adopted child; 5) establish a serious relationship, but always run aground. Psychological aspects of the main character, which is fighting against disease so that it takes away happiness. However, these conditions form a formidable and patient figure on God's provisions. (S3)

Move 4

The conclusion of this study, namely suffering is able to transform itself into a stronger figure. (S3)

Move 5

Table 2 shows that 1 abstracts (3%) are found as 2 moves pattern. Here is the example of the use 2 move pattern taken from the data of the study. The existence of these two moves is because on move 2 the writer submits questions in writing, so the abstract S9 only consists of 2 moves, namely move 3 and move 4, as in the following example.

This research is qualitative using a qualitative descriptive method. Data is collected through observation, interview and documentation techniques. (S9)

Move 3

The results of the discussion indicate that the oral tradition in return for pantun has a noble value, namely socialization, aesthetics, ethics, religion, culture, and history that are hereditary. Five stages in the pantun reply in the Bengkulu community wedding process, including 1) conveying intentions ... 2) asking for marriage ... 3) delivering ... 4) bride mixed ... (S9).

Move 4

The ambiguity of the research objectives in the abstract causes unclear results explained in the abstract. In the move 1 section, there are two research questions, whereas in the results section described in the text there is only an explanation of the pantun-reply procession, while the function and meaning are not explained. This implies that the rhetoric of moving in an obscure abstract will make abstract content less pleasant.

The findings of this research are revealed, first, more than ninety percent of writers introduce move 2 (purpose), move 3 (method), and move 4 (result) in abstract, while it is not more than thirty percent described move 1 (introduction) and move 5 (conclusion) on the abstract. It can be said that the majority of stages presented in this thesis abstract use simple steps. This is in accordance with the opinion that the simplest abstracts only consist of three stages, namely Stages-2 (research objectives), Stages-3 (research methods) and Stages-4 (results / research findings) [12]. Whereas, when the abstract in Indonesian is translated into English, it will be read by all readers in the world, especially if the article is published online.

The international abstract of AJP is not the number of stages or stages that must exist, but the existence of an argument, namely the writer's efforts through discourse to convince the reader to accept what the author believes by providing evidence or supporting data that is acceptable to dispel doubts of the reader [2]. This argument is intended to justify or draw the reader's attention to the results of the research that will be submitted in an AJP. According to Swales and Feak further, not all abstract writers use this style of rhetoric to attract readers' attention. They use other methods, such as referring to current actual problems, ongoing expert debates, and current theoretical or technological findings. Included in the findings of this study, the author argued the small portion of the argument which is still in the form of definition and statement.

The findings of this study reinforce previous research, namely Tseng also analyzed 30 AJP English abstracts written by Indonesian authors and published in scientific journals in Indonesia [13]. The results of Arsyad's research show that abstracts written by Indonesian authors mostly consist of only three stages (Stages-2, Stages-3 and Stages 4) although there are some that have five stages. It means that for AJP Indonesia writers, three stages (2, 3 and 4) are mandatory stages and Stages 1 and 5 are choices in AJP abstracts. This is also what the author found in 30 thesis abstracts in the last year written by Indonesian authors in Indonesian.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings which also found that there are three important stages (goals, methods, and results) in abstracts of English in the data in linguistic disciplines and applied linguistics written by native English speakers [13]. However, this finding is different from the opinion which says that AJP abstracts must have five stages (main objectives, specific goals, reasons, processes, and results) and which says that an AJP abstract must have four stages (purpose, methods, findings and conclusions) [14,15]. The results of this study also does not agree with the opinion which says that AJP abstracts must have five stages (reasons, topics, results, conclusions, and recommendations) [2].

According to the AJP writing guidelines in Indonesia, abstracts must be written in only 50-75 words and written in one paragraph [16]. This may be the reason why the author of AJP Indonesia writes a short abstract that only contains three mandatory stages, not four or five, as contained in AJP published in international journals. Besides, Ref. Wasseso states that every journal in Indonesia has its own style or format by referring to national AJP writing styles, such as from



the Indonesian Institute of Sciences or LIPI or international AJP writing styles such as the American Psychological Association (WHAT), Medical Library Association (MLA), American Anthropology Association (AAA), and others [17]. However, once the journal manager decides to apply certain writing formats and styles, AJP writers must follow the rules of writing the articles consistently. In addition, supervisors and students in writing abstracts should refer to the guidelines of the current thesis writing.

Stages-1 (background / introduction / situation) and stages-5 (discussion / conclusion / significance), seems to be considered unimportant by the majority of AJP Indonesia's writers given the scarcity of these stages [18]. This finding is appropriate with the findings of AJP abstract data in English in their agricultural fields [19]. According to Zhang, the absence of the AJP abstracts of Stages-1 and Stages-5 in their agriculture might be due to the style of abstract writing in these disciplines. However, according to Zhang et al., AJP abstracts without Stages-1 and Stages-5 are not effective to attract readers' attention to reading the entire article because through the Stages-1 the writer can convince the reader that the research topic is important and interesting and through Stages-5 the writer can inform the reader of the practical and theoretical benefits of his research findings.

The sequence of stages in the AJP abstract in the corpus of research data, Arsyad follows the sequence, as recommended by Swales [5,18]. This sequence follows the abstract writing guidelines in AJP, as suggested by Ibnu where AJP abstracts must contain problems, objectives, methods and results [17]. So, in terms of the sequence of stage performances, AJP in English written by Indonesian writers is not much different from English writers. The difference in the structure of the rhetoric is only in the absence of Stages-1 (background / introduction / situation) and Stages-5 (discussion / conclusion / significance) in most of the abstracts in this research data. Those data was found in this study, especially in the language teaching and linguistic fields.

For example, examines how Vietnamese authors write their ideas into English AJP abstract in the field of agricultural science [19]. After analyzing twenty AJP abstracts in the corpus of research data. Ref. Zhang found that in contrast to abstract standard formats that were accepted by the international academic community, abstracts in their research data consisted of objectives, methods and products without any introductory or introductory parts and conclusions [19]. According to Zhang the absence of introduction and conclusion on most of the abstracts in their corpus of study can reduce the quality of the abstract because through the introduction and conclusions the author can persuade the reader to read the entire article [19].

Ref. Ren and Li examined the abstract rhetorical style of conference papers in English written by Iranian academics in the educational discipline [20]. They found that although there were four possible moves in an abstract (problems, goals, methods, and research results), only three were considered mandatory (goals, methods and results), while the problem stages were considered choices. According to them, the structure of abstract English rhetoric in conference papers in

the field of education is different from that in linguistic and applied linguistics and communication disciplines which have up to six and even seven stages with four compulsory stages and two or three stages of choice. Fourtation and Dumanig argue that their findings reinforce previous relevant study findings where conference papers in different disciplines tend to have different abstract rhetorical structures.

Based on the findings, this thesis abstract is predominantly descriptive because it still lacks arguments as seen on move 1. This is also in accordance with other comparative studies between AJP abstracts and thesis abstracts written in English which are examined by Hyland [21]. Ren and Li saw the rhetorical style of 25 abstracts taken from 5 different popular journal articles in applied linguistics and 25 abstracts taken from Chinese's postgraduate students. Using the schematic structure model as a guide to analysis, Ren and Li found the five stages, as suggested by Hyland (introduction, goals, methods, products and conclusions) in most of the two abstract groups in their research corpus. However, according to Hyland the thesis of postgraduate students tends to be more descriptive while the AJP abstract is more persuasive and argumentative in its rhetorical style [21]. Other differences between the two abstract groups, according to Ren and Li, that the Preliminary Stages (Stages-1) in the thesis abstract tend to be longer while the Product Stages (Stages-4) tend to be simpler and shorter while in the AJP abstracts these two stages (Stages -1 and 4) tend to be the same length. Ren and Li suggest that abstracts written by new authors reflect the attitude of those who are not confident in arguing in scientific work [20]. They also tend to write a longer introduction as compensation and to fulfill the required number of words.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that out of 30 abstracts in the three fields (linguistics, literature, and language teaching), in the teaching and linguistics fields, there are five stages in the presentation of the asbtrak, while the literary field is only four moves. However, move one and move five of the three fields are in the optional classification, except in the literary field there is no movement. Based on its frequency, literary field is more dominant 4 moves, but this literary field also has only 2 moves. The field of linguistics and language teaching with the same frequency on these 4 moves. However, the 3 moves in the field of liguistics and teaching are more dominant, while the literary field is less dominant. It can be said that move 2 (destination) is categorized as conventional, move 3 (methodology) and move 4 (result) as obligatory, and move 1 (introduction) and move 5 (conclusion) as optional. In general, the move pattern used in this thesis abstract is 3 move patterns (move 2, move, 3 and move 4).

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