Moves Analysis on Abstracts Written by the Students in Academic Writing Class

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ABSTRACT

This paper contains analysis results on abstracts written by students in Academic Writing course. The analysis includes analyses on Moves and linguistic features. The analysis aims at finding out how the abstract writing structures of the English Education students are in the Academic Writing course. The abstract analysis also includes the analysis on the use of the linguistic features in the abstracts. The analysis uses a qualitative research approach. There are totally 10 abstracts that are analyzed. These are then called as the data. Data obtained is analyzed using genre analysis approach. Results of analysis on the 10 abstracts showed that some of the abstracts are written using 5 kinds of Moves. All of the abstracts are found using Purpose Move and Method Move. Meanwhile, Situation Move is found in 5 abstracts. 8 abstracts are identified using Result Move. Conclusion Move is found in 5 abstracts. The results also show that all of the abstract writers use pronouns 'the writer' and 'the researcher'. The use of personal pronoun 'she' is also found in 1 abstract. Hedges used in abstracts written by students in Academic Writing course vary from modal auxiliary verbs, adjectival, adverbial, nominal, to Approximates of degree.

Keywords: genre, academic writing, abstract

ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini secara khusus menampilkan hasil analisis pada abstrak yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa pada mata kuliah Academic Writing. *Analisis hasil tulisan abstrak in meliputi analisis* Move *dan* Lingusitic features. *Tujuan analisis ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana struktur penulisan abstrak yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa semester 6 jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris pada mata kuliah academic writing. Analisis abstrak ini juga meliputi analisis penggunaan* linguistic feature *dalam abstrak. Analisis ini mengguakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif. Total abstrak yang dianalisis adalah 10 yang kemudian abstrak ini disebut sebagai data. Data yang diperolah dianalisis dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis genre. Hasil analisis dari 10 abstrak menunjukkan bahwa sebagian dari abstrak tersebut telah ditulis dengan lima macam* Move. *semua abstrak yang ditulis ditemukan menggunakan* Move Purpose *dan* Move Method. *Sedangkan* Move Situation *ditemukan pada 5 abstrak. Kemudian 8 abstrak teridentifikasi menggunakan* Move Result. Move Conclusion *ditemukan di lima abstrak. Hasil analisis juga menunjukkan bahwa semua penulis abstrak menggunakan kata ganti* 'the writer' *dan* 'the researcher'. *Penggunaan kata ganti orang seperti* 'she' *juga ditemukan pada satu abstrak.* Hedges *yang digunakan pada abstrak yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa pada*

matakuliah academic writing cukup beragam seperti modal auxiliary verbs, adjectival, adverbial, nominal *dan* Approximates of degree.

Kata kunci: *genre,* academic writing*, abstrak*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a second language refers to teaching students whose first language is not English. In the academic context, students are required to produce a piece of writing named academic writing. At the end of the study, they must be able to write an academic writing. Writing an academic text requires some aspects that form a good writing. Good writing usually requires good grammar and organization. Grammar feature in writing must fulfill a rhetorical function. The use of proper sentence structure, precise vocabulary and proper rhetoric helps the reader to identify proposition in the text more readily (Richards, 1992: 103). A final project as one of the academic writings, consist of several parts. One of the final project parts is abstract. Abstract as a part of a final project is the preview of the whole pages in a final project writing. Abstract writing is a highly specialized form of academic writing. It requires a clear and concise writing ability that conveys complicated information in a limited amount of space. Abstracts reach broader audience than almost any other form of academic writing.

Academic writing, as one of the subjects in English Department, is developed to give the students knowledge of writing in academic context. In producing academic writing, it is a important that the students to have a sufficient knowledge on writing and have competence in producing a text especially the final projects.

The fact has triggered to conduct a study on the students' academic writing, particularly on the abstract. Specifically, it focuses on the students abstracts based on the genre analysis which covers the study of the generic structure and the linguistic features. In this study the linguistic features will depend on the theory of Swales which states that the typical linguistic features of abstract in academic writing are the tense, the use of personal pronoun and the hedges.

This study was conducted for two reasons, practically and theoretically. Practically, the students do not have enough exercise especially in writing their final project urged by some factors, each of the courses is conducted for around fourteen to sixteen meetings and the focus of each course varies differently. In this study, I will not take the whole courses as the object of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Genre

According to Martin genre is "a stage, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture" (in Eggins 1994: 26). There are three things that can be noted from Martin's definition of genre: stages, purposes, and culture. In other words, to be called as a genre, an activity must have some stages, purposes and contexts of culture. Swales also mention communicative purpose, stages, and linguistic features for a genre. Finally, it can be inferred that a genre has some features like communicative purpose, stages, and linguistic features. In addition, genre must belong to a particular discourse community and culture.

Communicative Purposes

One of the genre characteristics is the occurrence of communicative purpose. Communicative purposes become the characteristic of genre that differentiate one genre to another. This means that what makes a communicative event belongs to the same genre will be defined by the communicative purpose. It was explained by that "the principal criteria feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is a shared set of communicative purposes" Swales (1990:46). Similarly, Bhatia states that communicative purposes are reliable to be the criterion in determining a genre as well as to distinguish it from other genres (cited in Safnil, 2000: 5). Thus, the communicative purposes are of primary importance in creating a genre (Lakic, 2000).

The Move

Text should realize a certain structure to maintain the purpose of communicating a meaning, some definitions of Move which are proposed by linguists of English for Specific Purposes. One of those linguists is Holmes (cited in Safnil, 2000:86) that explains Move as 'a realization of a specific overall communicative purposes through a variety of linguistic strategies'. Move as'…a semantic unit which is related to the writers' purpose (Dudley-Evans, 2000:87. Another definition by Ngowu (noted by Safnil only) adds the constituent elements of Move may consist of a number of constituent elements called steps.

A text should have an organization of ideas, according to Hyland generic structure" as the prototypical sequences of writers' meaning move through in a text to achieve a particular purpose". (Hyland, 2002: 62) generic structure is "the stages, step by step organization of the genre" (Eggins, 1994: 36), It can be inferred, then, that generic structure is the organization of ideas in a text that consists of stages or steps.

Using the most general term, (Eggins, 1994: 89) labels the stages of a genre: a beginning, a middle, and an end. However, because she feels that the labels are 'empty' and can be found in all genres, Eggins finally suggested that they should be avoided. Instead, the term Move is commonly used for both written and spoken genres to refer to a stage in a genre. The writing of a Move is capitalized for the first letter.

Then, it can be noted that a Move is a semantic unit that realizes the communicative purposes. To realize the communicative purpose of a particular Move, a Move may consist of a step or a series of steps. The presence of steps normally occurs for long texts like research article, dissertations, and theses. Abstract, as the focus of this study, is a kind of short text. Steps are not found in this genre so, the genre of abstracts only consists of a series of Moves (Samraj, 2002: 34),

Being more specific in Move analysis, Swales suggests that "a crucial starting point…is to consider the purpose of the target genre…" Meanwhile (Dudley-Evans, 1994: 5) proposes two techniques to identify a Move: by using linguistic evidence and understanding the text together with the expectations on the text from the general academic community and the particular discourse community. The latter technique is applied when the linguistic evidence seems to be unclear.

Linguistic Features

In this study, the three linguistic features are analyzed. They are tense choice, personal pronouns and hedges. Those features were taken as they are characteristic features usually found in abstracts. The linguistic features in this study refer to the tense choice, personal pronouns and hedges.

Tenses

Tense is encoded in the part of the verbal group called finite. The interpersonal role of finite for tenses is as a sign of time in relation to the speaker. Tenses used in the abstract vary from past to present tense. The use of the tenses is also related to moves. For example, situating the research Move is more likely to use present tense. Other Moves like Purpose, Method, and Result Moves tend to use past tense as I found.

Past tense is usually used for purpose, methods and results (Samraj, 2002: 42). Meanwhile present tense is used in the background and conclusion. However, Salager-Meyer (cited in Samraj, 2002:43) emphasizes that tense choice is a rhetorical choice and not an obligatory constraint. Thus one might write Purpose or Result using present tense instead of past tense supported Salager-Meyer's when in her study she found that the uses of tenses are varied (Samraj, 2002: 7).

Personal Pronoun

The use of personal pronoun seems to have been shifted from Graetz era to nowadays. Graetz observed that the third person pronoun was found in an abstract, but nowadays studies demonstrate the use of first personal pronoun. Referring to Hyland's explanation (Hyland, 2002: 103), the use of personal subjects in academic writing reveals overt acceptance of personal responsibility for the claims being made.

Hedges

Hedges, in academic discourse, are significant since "they are a central rhetorical means of gaining communal adherence to knowledge claims" (Salager-Meyer, 1997:106). Hedges are used to encode the speaker's opinion. This is because hedges relate the proportional information in the text and the writer's factual interpretation (Salager-Meyer, 1997:115).

There are two elements which serve the function of hedges. They are finite and mood adjunct. Finite which encodes speaker's opinion is usually called modal finite such as Will, Can, Must, Should, etc. However, not all mood adjuncts can serve the function of hedges. They are adjuncts of polarity for example Not, Yes, No, Adjuncts of readiness such as Willingly, Readily, Gladly, and Adjuncts of Temporality of time for instance Yet, Still, Already. Meanwhile mood adjuncts, which express hedges from (Halliday, 1994:82-83), can be seen below.

1. Adjuncts of Modality:

a. Probability : Probably, Possibly, Certainly, Perhaps, maybe
b. Usuality   : Usually, Sometimes, Always, Never, Seldom
c. Obligation : Definitely, Absolutely, Possibly

2. Adjuncts of Temporality

Typically   : Occasionally, Generally, Regularly

3. Adjuncts of Mood:

a. Obviousness: Of Course, Surely, Obviously
b. Intensity   : Just, Simply, Merely, Only, Actually
c. Degree   : Quite, Almost, Scarcely, Hardly, Totally, Entirely

The Modal finites and Mood adjuncts that express hedges are actually not so different from what Salager-Meyer mentions. He composes seven expressions that represent the use of hedges in scientific English called 'Strategic stereotypes' (1997:109-110). They are:

1. Modal Auxiliary verbs, for example like may, might, can, could, should, would.
2. Modal lexical verbs, for example to believe, to assume, to suggest, to estimate, to tend, to appear, to seem, to think, to argue, to indicate, to propose, to speculate
3. Adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases, for example possible, probable, un/likely (adjectives); assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion (noun); perhaps, possibly, probably, practically, presumably, virtually, apparently (adverbs)
4. Approximators of degree, quantity and time, for instance approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally, generally, usually, somewhat, somehow, a lot of
5. Introductory phrases, like I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that, we feel that
6. "if" clause, for example if true, if anything
7. Compound hedges, for instance: it would appear, it seems reasonable to assume that.

The last linguistic features that will be analyzed in this thesis is personal pronoun. When appearing as subject, personal pronoun is one of the elements of mood block. (Butt et al, 1994:68) stated that "a fundamental relationship in English grammar", then it is together with finite and subject result in strong bound.

While the use of personal subject, according to:

Personal pronoun commonly used in abstract includes first person pronoun and third person pronoun. First person pronoun may be in the form of singular or plural. Singular first person pronoun is commonly found in thesis, dissertation or other academic works that is done by one person. Whereas the plural person pronoun is taken by them whose work are conducted by more than one person, like research article abstract. And the use of those forms is same as that of first person pronoun forms. Hyland (cited in Samraj, 2002:54)

Since the final project abstracts in this study are written by a single person, the appropriate personal pronoun used should be singular. The singular first person can be in the form of subject 'I', object me, or possessive pronoun my. The singular third person pronoun may also have the same possible position as subject He/she/the researcher, object him/her, or possessive pronoun his/her.

Abstract is always the first to read after the title in the papers either a published or an unpublished one. This makes an abstract together with title are 'at the same time both front matter and summary matter' (Swales, 1990: 179). Thus abstract can be used as the representation of the content and the structure of the texts. As a genre, abstract must have the distinctive features of genre, one of which is the communicative purpose. The communicative purpose of the abstract is then to represent the text briefly and objectively through highlighting the major points and outlining the significant details of the text. To realize this communicative purpose, abstract has schematic structure that consists of some moves.

METHOD

This study applies the descriptive qualitative method which attempts to describe the data represented in the form of words. As Nunan (1992: 4) suggests that qualitative research advocates the use of qualitative methods, concerning the behavior from the actor's own understanding of reference, exploratory, descriptive and process oriented. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe systematically the fact and the characteristics of the given population or area of interest factually and accurately (Isaac and Michael, 1997: 46). Furthermore, Mc Millan and Schumaker (1984: 26), (as cited in Mirriam, 1988: 77) stated that the aim of descriptive research is to examine events or phenomenon.

Object of the Study

The object of this study was the abstracts written by English Education Department students of 'Universitas PGRI Semarang'. There were only 10 abstracts taken. It represents one class of the academic writing subject.

Generic structure refers to the organization of ideas in a text which characterizes the genre of the text and which consists of stages where the communicative purposes are of the text realized. The stages are called moves. Meanwhile the linguistic features include the use of tenses, personal pronouns and hedges in the abstracts.

Unit of Analysis

To analyze the generic structure, the unit of analysis in this research was Move. Meanwhile, the units of analysis for the linguistic features were tenses, personal pronouns and hedges.

Move is a communicative unit that has a communicative purpose. This communicative purpose is a distinctive feature that determines a segment of a text as a particular move. For example, Method Move has a communicative purpose to describe the method used for the research done, whereas result Move explains the result of the research gained. In thesis abstract, each paragraph is usually assigned to a Move as notes that "when a unit of thought conveyed in a particular has a distinctive communicative unit of a Move, then the boundary of the paragraph signals the boundary of the communicative unit at the same time" (Safmil, 2000: 8) .

Hedges are also the unit of analysis in this research. Subject, when representing the personal pronoun, together with the finite results in a strong relationship called mood. Meanwhile hedges are used to show the speaker's opinion.

Technique of Data Collection

The data of this study were sentences in the abstracts. The total of 10 final projects formed the data of this study.

There is one type of data collection procedure in qualitative research applied in this study; it was documenting. In this study, the data were collected through documents. The steps conducted were as below:

1. Taking 10 abstracts from 10 English final projects of English Department.
2. Writing down those chosen abstracts to be analyzed.

Technique of Data Analysis

The analysis of the data of this study was done in an attempt to analyze the genre of the abstracts. The evaluation was based on the data gathered. The analysis focuses on the generic structure realized by Move and linguistic features. The data of the study were analyzed using the genre approach. The steps of the data analysis are as follows:

1. Identifying the stages inside the abstracts in this case defined as Moves found in the abstracts.
2. Identifying the linguistic features of the abstracts which include tense, personal pronoun, and hedges.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The generic structure displayed on the students' abstracts consists of five Moves: Situating the Research, Purpose, Methods, Results and Conclusion. This Move was found in abstract numbers 5, 6, 8, 9, 10. The following table shows the number and percentage of the presence of each move in the data. The Move on the abstracts found in this study consisted of five Moves. Those Moves are Situating the research, Purpose, Methods, Results, and Conclusion. Those Moves were the same as the Moves proposed by Santos. This means that all of the English final project abstracts applied the generic structure or the Moves.

Table 1:
The Moves Found in the Abstracts

Moves	Number	Percentage
Situating the Research	5	50%
Purpose	10	100%
Methods	10	100%
Result	8	80%
Conclusion	5	50%

From the following table, it can be seen that the use of tenses varies. Both tenses, present and past tenses are used in Moves.

Table 2:
The Use of Tenses in the Abstracts

Abstract	Present Tense	Past Tense
Abstract 1	P, M, R, C	M
Abstract 2	P, M, R, C	R
Abstract 3	P, M, R, C	-
Abstract 4	P, R, C	M
Abstract 5	S, P, M, C	-
Abstract 6	S, C	P, M, R
Abstract 7	P, C	M, R
Abstract 8	S, P, M, R, C	-
Abstract 9	S, P, M, C	-
Abstract 10	S, P, C	M, R

The table 2 above presents the finding of tenses in the whole Moves. There were only two tenses used in the abstracts. Those tenses were used in various Moves. It is obviously shows that present tense can be found in most of the Moves of abstracts. Past tense can only be found in three Moves, they are Methods Move, Result Move and only one Purpose Move applied past tense.

In order to simplify the identification method, the first letter of each Move is used to define the Move. Here is the list of the Moves:

S: Situating the Research Move   R: Result Move
P: Purpose Move   C: Conclusion Move
M: Methods Move

The Use of Personal Pronouns in the Final Project Abstracts

Only two personal pronouns were found in the final project abstracts. The table below shows the findings of the use of personal pronouns in the final project abstracts.

Table 3:
The Use of Personal Pronoun

No.	Abstract	Personal Pronoun Used
1.	1, 5,10, 9, 8,7, 6, 4, 2,3	The writer, The researcher
2.	10	She

The table above shows the findings of personal pronouns used in the abstracts. There were only three kinds of personal pronoun. They were 'The writer', 'The researcher' and 'She'. The first two pronouns were found in all of the abstracts and the third personal pronoun was found in abstract 10.

The Use of Hedges in the Final Project Abstracts

From the findings in table 4.4, it can be seen that there were only four expressions of hedges that were used in the final project abstracts. Those expressions appeared in abstracts 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9. The expressions of hedges were found in various moves. The hedges found in the data can be seen in the following table.

The table shows that only three of the hedges expressions were found in the Moves of the abstracts.

The result of analysis has presented that students' abstract was written structurally and follow the moves. The five moves introduced were surface construction in which build the abstract. The students of English Department, as undergraduate students, being structurally constructing their text. Undergo the structure in their abstract writing as their assignment has described their ability in understanding the text structure. It also portrays the outcome of the learning academic writing. Further discussion lead to the students' ability in creating an academic text. Realizing the generic structure by putting the Moves structurally, emerged the students to well practice of learning that later build their ability in writing academic text.

Linguistic features as range from the use of tenses like present and past tense, the use of personal pronoun and the hedges. The students used the simple present and past in various moves, as they are the most common ones. A certain move may require certain tenses, such as in Method, it takes past tense. The correct use of tenses brings reader to the precise meaning for academic text. Should the result shows that students use inappropriate tenses in certain move, the students abstract would not represent the content of the text. Students misused of tenses considered the lack of grammatical notions. Hedges go around two kind of personal pronoun. The abstracts contain the appropriate hedges all around the paragraphs. The abstract as the academic text is understand as restricted text which only written by one person. Students written those abstract has successfully put themselves as the researcher or the writer of the text.

CONCLUSION

The first analysis was to find out the generic structure called Move. Those Moves are Situating the Research Move, Purpose Move, Method Move, Result Move and the Conclusion Move. The study revealed that the Situating the Research Move as the first Move showed 50% which means that it was applied in 5 abstracts out of 10 abstracts in the data. While analysis of Purpose, and Method Moves showed 100%. It proves that the whole ten abstracts in the data applied those two Moves. The analysis of the Result Move showed that this Move is found in eight abstracts, that means 80%. Finally the Conclusion Move is found in 5 abstracts, so that the percentage showed 50%. From the findings of the analysis, I can conclude that only five abstracts which have the Moves in sequence.

The second thing covered in this study is linguistic features. It includes the use of tenses, personal pronoun and hedges. The analysis revealed that the tense used in the abstracts are present tense and past tense. The past tense is used in all of abstracts which varied in Moves. Meanwhile, the personal pronoun is only the third personal pronoun, which is found in nine abstracts, and the other personal pronoun is 'she', which is used in only one abstract.

Finally, the analysis showed that the use of expression that represents hedges is varied. Those are Modal Auxiliary verb, Approximators, Adverbials and Intensity.

Table 4:
Expression of Hedges, Number of Abstract, and Moves

Expression of Hedges	Number of Abstract	Moves
Modal auxiliary verbs	6	C
Modal lexical verb	-	-
Adjectival, adverbial and nominal	1, 3, 9	M, C, S
Approximators of degree	3, 5, 6	C, S, M
Introductory Phrases	-	-
'If' Clause	-	-
Compound Hedges	-	-

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