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Rhetorical Moves of Research Article Abstract in Linguistic and Language Journals with Different Quartile Value

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ABSTRACT

Writing an abstract in a research article is very important. The existence of abstract is compulsory within a research article. It is a research summary that must be attached and presented with the article. This study aims to find out moves and the most common pattern in RA abstracts in linguistic and language journals with different quartiles value. By using descriptive qualitative method, eighty RA abstract of linguistic and language journals with different quartile value were extracted from eight journals. Namely: Journal of Second Language Writing, Studies in English Language Education, 3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature, Applied Research on English Language, JALT Journal, World Journal of English Language, Research in Language, Suvannabhumi. The result finding; 1) Move 2 (Aim/Purpose) exists in seventy RA abstracts, Move 3 (Method) is present in sixty two RA abstracts, and Move 4 (Finding/Result) appears in Seventy Eight RA abstracts. In contrast, Move 1 (Introduction) is found in only 50 RA abstracts, and Move 5 (Conclusion) appears in 31 RA abstracts. 2) Q1 journal have the most frequent move, indicating a more comprehensive and detailed structure in their abstracts. In contrast, journals in lower quartiles, such as Q3 and Q4, often feature abstracts with fewer moves. As this study focuses only on the rhetorical move and pattern of RA abstract in field of linguistic and language journal with different quartile value, future research should conduct a comparative study and language features of the RA abstract in the field of across discipline with different quartile value.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Creating an abstract for a research article is crucial. Since it serves as a summary of the information contained in the research that has been conducted. As a result, abstract writing should be brief, simple, and constrained the information necessary to comprehend the overall article's content. Research papers, theses, and conference papers commonly have abstracts. Writing abstracts has become mandatory in journals, research articles and theses. After reading the title someone reads the abstract first before the introduction.

In national or international journals, abstract submission is also crucial. Reading the summary will provide you additional information about the goals. Key words that make the research easier to examine are identified by the reader with the help of the abstract. The abstract's shift aims to broaden the research article's objective.

Writing an abstract is not an easy task. The abstract should be written in an orderly manner, so that readers from different countries can understand and comprehend the overview of the article through the abstract. According to Arsyad (2014), university students find it challenging to produce an abstract for a research article (RA), but so do lecturers and inexperienced authors.

Difficulty in writing abstracts in Indonesia, as in many other places, often relates to understanding the correct move and pattern in academic abstract writing. Many researchers may not be familiar with the standard structure of academic abstracts, which typically include the research background, research objectives, research methods, research findings, and conclusions. This difficulty often results in abstracts that are unfocused and do not accurately portray the essence of the research. Limited proficiency in English, which is often the international language in academic publications, can lead to challenges in crafting sentences and phrases that are precise and accurate.

A rhetorical move is an effective and convincing way to use language. It is a discourse technique that uses a variety of strategies to persuade and sway an audience. According to (Suryani et al., 2014), a rhetorical move is the study and ability to use language with a persuasive effect. A more modern definition of rhetorical refers to the ability to recognize and respond to the audience in a writing situation, as well as to comprehend the role that the audience plays in forming communication. Thus, rhetorical moves serve as a weapon that gives writers the ability to persuade their audience of their viewpoints. Additionally, a rhetorical move demonstrates the writer's command of the language and rhetorical aim to accomplish certain goals with the words used.

According to Brett (1994), move is a useful component of texts that serves a communicative function or seeks to accomplish a certain objective. Move is a communicative category, according to (Brett, 1994), although (Holmes, 1997) adds that it is the achievement of a particular overall communicative objective through a variety of linguistic methods.

Therefore, the ability to process language efficiently so that the readers can quickly grasp and guide the message in our writing by guiding the plot through the intricate to the climax is known as a rhetorical move.

Numerous studies have been conducted on abstracts by both domestic and foreign researchers. For example, (Kaya & Yağiz, 2020) reviewed the abstracts of research papers in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) authored by Turkish and non-Turkish academics. The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the motions of the two groups. However, abstracts from Turkish authors typically had three moves: purpose, method, and product. In contrast, abstracts from foreign authors were more likely to have four moves: purpose, method, product, and conclusion.

The second study, authored by (Tan & San, 2012), examined and contrasted the rhetorical devices used in the abstracts of published papers in the field of communications and computer systems engineering. Using Santos' (1996) five moves pattern as the model of analysis, the data showed that some of the rhetorical moves were used in both the published articles and the abstracts of the students' term papers. Nonetheless, there were differences in their usage patterns. When compared to summaries with fewer moves, the study also showed that abstracts containing all five moves provided a more thorough summary of the study's substance.

Some previous studies have discussed the move analysis and linguistic features of research abstract (RA) in various disciplines. There are rarely study has discussed about the rhetorical moves of RA's abstract in Linguistic and Language journals with the different quartile value.

Studying abstracts from journals with different quartile values allows us to understand which research trends are dominant or receiving more attention in international research community. It usually represent research that is considered to have greater quality and impact. Journals with higher quartile values typically publish research that makes a significant contribution to the field of linguistics. Therefore, researching abstracts from these journals can provide insights into the development of theories and methodologies in linguistics. Studying abstracts from journals with different quartile values enables us to evaluate the quality of the research and the methods used. This can help in identifying best practices and innovations in linguistic research.

Lower skill in writing competency is another issues that current students and researchers face. It includes lack of writing an abstract. The quality of the abstract determines the quality of the entire

article, because the abstract is the first part of the article that readers read. If the abstract of the article is well written, it can be a safe bet that the rest of the article is also well written.

Even there were many previous studies has been analyzed abstracts. But, there are rarely study has discussed about analysis rhetorical moves in different quartile value in linguistic and language journals. That is also one of the reason of taking this title.

There are two research questions for this study, they are:
1. What moves are found in RA abstracts in linguistic and language journals with different quartiles value?
2. What are the differences of article abstracts with different quartile values?

2. METHOD

This research used descriptive qualitative approach with using content analysis as the research method because this research analyzed documents' contents. According to Arifin (2012), descriptive qualitative research is a study that aims to explain and provide answers on a current occurrence or event. The method of descriptive research focuses on characterizing the traits of a certain person or group (Kothari, 2004). The data in this research is non-numerical data which are the abstracts from various journals. There are some types of research that can be classified as descriptive research; one of them is documentary analysis, or is usually called content analysis (Ary, et al., 2010).

The total number of abstracts was eighty (80) RA's abstract of linguistics and language journal which published with different quartile value. The journal extracted from different quartile value (Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4). It consisted of 10 RA's abstracts per journal, and there were 2 journal in each quartile. (Gregory, 2009) state that the minimum requirement of the corpus includes for genre analysis is thirty texts. Hence, the total of corpus included in this study was eighty RA's abstracts to fulfill the requirements of sample.

In this study, the researcher selected two journals to represent each quartile. The chosen journals are those ranked among the top two in their respective quartiles. The reason for this was by selecting the top two journals in each quartile, the researcher ensure that the journals used are the best representation of their respective quartiles. The top-ranked journals in a quartile tend to have a strong reputation in their field and publish research with significant scientific impact within the context of their quartile. The RA's abstracts are published in 2023. These journals are 1) Journal of Second Language Writing, 2) Studies in English Language Education, 3) 3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature Journal, 4) Applied Research on English Language, 5) JALT Journal, 6) World Journal of English Language, 7) Research in Language, and 8) Suvannabhumi.

The technique sampling used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is predicated on various considerations, according to Sugiyono (2017). The considerations behind the selection of these journals because of these journals are already indexed in Scopus and these journals are open-source journal that can be accessed for free.

3. RESULT(S) AND DISCUSSION

The first question of this research is what moves are found in RA abstracts in linguistic and language journals with different quartiles value. The data analysis result show that authors use different number of rhetorical move in their abstract. The frequencies of rhetorical moves in those RA abstracts are shown in table 1 below:

Table 1. Rhetorical Frequencies in the RA Abstracts

Rhetorical Move		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Percentage	Category
Move	Desc	n= 20	n= 20	n= 20	n= 20	n= 80		
Move 1	Introduction	16	14	13	7	50	62.5%	Conventional

Move 2	Aim/ Purpose	19	17	17	17	70	87.5%	Conventional
Move 3	Method	20	16	14	12	62	77.5%	Conventional
Move 4	Finding/ Result	20	20	19	19	78	97.5%	Conventional
Move 5	Conclusion/ Suggestion	10	9	7	5	31	38.7%	Optional

The data from Table 1 highlights the distribution of rhetorical moves in RA (Research Article) abstracts across four quartiles (Q1 to Q4) and provides a comprehensive comparison of their frequency. The findings demonstrate varying patterns of rhetorical move usage, influenced by journal quartile rankings, which are summarized and analyzed as follows:

The introduction move appears in 62.5% of the abstracts analyzed, showing a moderate presence overall. The highest frequency is in Q1 (80%), with a noticeable decline in Q4 (35%). This trend indicates that higher-ranked journals prioritize contextualizing their research and presenting the rationale for the study. Conversely, lower-ranked journals (Q4) may underutilize this move, potentially diminishing the clarity of the research's relevance for readers.

Aim or purpose is one of the most consistently used moves, appearing in 87.5% of abstracts. Its presence is particularly high in Q1 (95%) and only slightly lower in Q2, Q3, and Q4 (85% each). This uniformity reflects the universal importance of explicitly stating research objectives across all journal quartiles, underscoring its role as a fundamental rhetorical component in abstracts.
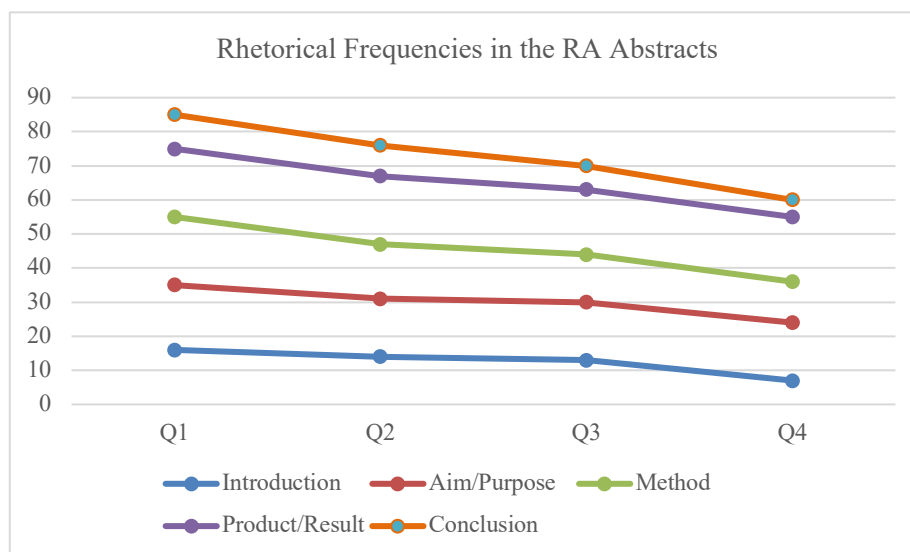
The method move appears in 77.5% of the abstracts, with the highest representation in Q1 (100%) and a gradual decline through Q2 (80%), Q3 (70%), and Q4 (60%). This pattern highlights the importance of methodological transparency in high-impact journals (Q1), as it directly contributes to the study's credibility. Lower-ranked journals (Q4) may focus less on methodological details, potentially impacting the perceived rigor of their studies.

Finding or result is the most frequently occurring move, present in 97.5% of the abstracts. It is consistently included in nearly all quartiles, with Q1 and Q2 exhibiting 100% frequency and Q3 and Q4 slightly lower at 95%. This near-universal inclusion demonstrates the centrality of presenting results in abstracts, regardless of journal ranking, as it is the core element of scientific communication.

The conclusion or suggestion move appears in only 38.7% of abstracts, making it the least frequent move. Its usage is highest in Q1 (50%) and decreases progressively through Q2 (45%), Q3 (35%), and Q4 (25%). This declining trend suggests that lower-ranked journals may view the conclusion move as less critical or optional, focusing more on other rhetorical elements.

The data reveal clear distinctions between higher-ranked (Q1, Q2) and lower-ranked (Q3, Q4) journals in terms of rhetorical move usage. High-ranking journals prioritize a more structured and comprehensive approach to abstract writing, often including moves like introduction, method, and conclusion to ensure clarity, credibility, and contextual relevance. In contrast, lower-ranked journals exhibit less consistency, particularly in the inclusion of introduction and conclusion moves, which may affect the overall quality and impact of their abstracts.

As a response to the second research question, the charts below illustrate the differences in the research article abstract with different quartile value.

Figure 1. The Differentiation of Rhetorical Frequencies in RA Abstracts

The blue line illustrates the frequency of the "Introduction" rhetorical move across research article abstracts categorized by quartile rankings (Q1 to Q4). The data reveals a consistent downward trend in the usage of this move as the quartile rank decreases.

In Q1 abstracts, the "Introduction" move is used the most frequently, with approximately 16 occurrences. This suggests that higher-ranking journals place significant importance on providing background context to establish the relevance and foundation of the research. In Q2, the frequency drops slightly to around 14 occurrences, maintaining a substantial focus on the introductory content but with a slight reduction compared to Q1. Moving to Q3, the usage declines further to about 12 occurrences, reflecting a shift toward more concise abstracts. Finally, in Q4, the frequency reaches its lowest point at approximately 8 occurrences, indicating minimal emphasis on introductory elements.

The red line illustrates the frequency of the "Aim/Purpose" rhetorical move across research article abstracts categorized by quartile rankings (Q1 to Q4). The data shows a distinct pattern, with a notable decline from Q1 to Q2, followed by a consistent usage rate from Q2 through Q4.

In Q1, the "Aim/Purpose" move is the most frequently used, with approximately 19 occurrences. This highlights the emphasis higher-ranking journals place on explicitly stating the research objective, ensuring clarity and alignment with the readers' expectations. From Q2 onward, the frequency drops to about 17 occurrences and remains steady across Q2, Q3, and Q4. This uniformity in lower quartiles suggests that while the "Aim/Purpose" move remains a critical component of abstracts, it is expressed more succinctly or with less elaboration in journals with lower quartile rankings.

The green line titled "Method" displays data trends across four quarters (Q1 to Q4). The values start at a little over 20 in Q1 and show a steady decline through the quarters. By Q2, the value has slightly decreased but remains relatively close to Q1. In Q3, the trend continues downward, with the value dropping further. However, the most significant decline occurs from Q3 to Q4, where the value reaches its lowest point, close to 5. This indicates a continuous decrease in the measured metric, with a sharper decline in the last quarter.

The purple line, "Product/Result" illustrates the trend of a measured metric across four quarters (Q1 to Q4). Unlike the previous chart (Chart 3. Method), which exhibited a continuous decline, this chart shows stability in the first two quarters (Q1 and Q2), maintaining a constant value of 20. However, the decline from Q1 and Q2 to Q3 and Q4 is not too significant, where the value decreases by only a difference of 1. After this drop, the value remains stable between Q3 and Q4 without further decline.

Comparing this with green line, both charts indicate a decrease over time, but Chart 3 shows a steady decline across all quarters, while Chart 4 remains stable initially and then drops suddenly before stabilizing again.

The orange line shows a declining trend across four categories: Q1, Q2, Q3, and "Category 4." Starting with a value of 10 in Q1, the data gradually decreases to approximately 9 in Q2, then drops further to around 7 in Q3, and finally reaches 6 in "Category 4." This consistent decline indicates a regression or reduction in the use of conclusions in abstract articles.

The first research question of this research is what moves are found in RA abstracts in linguistic and language journals with different quartile value. The finding of this research shows that the majority of journal article abstract in different quartile value have move 2, move 3, and move 4. Move 2, Move 3, and Move 4 are the most frequently occurring moves because writers consider these three moves to be essential elements in the structure of an abstract. They are typically used to elaborate on the main ideas or key points that the article aims to convey.

On the other hand, move 1 and move 5 are regarded as supporting moves. Their role is more focused on providing an initial context and concluding the writing with a summary or recommendation, which makes their frequency relatively lower compared to Move 2, Move 3, and Move 4.

The consistent results of move identification in the research article abstracts with different quartile value above happen probably because the authors have similar writing experiences, sociocultural environment, background knowledge, and educational level, or they follow the same guideline set by a discourse community.

The result of this research is in line with Belcher (2009) who stated that there are three essential ingredients of an abstracts, they are purpose, method and result of the research to help convincing information for readers. Hardjanto (2017) also found that move 2, move 3, and move 4 were found in almost all abstracts and thus were considered obligatory moves in five international journals published in the fields of biology, engineering, linguistics, medicine, and physics.

According to Wei et al., (2022), the research goal is outlined in Move 2. It usually responds to the query, "What is the study about? This step is essential because it provides context for the reader by describing the study's importance and its goals. Move 2 is typically required in academic writing, as evidenced by numerous studies that have shown, especially in abstracts authored by inexperienced writers. According to (Swales et al., 2009), move 3 is the methodology section is vital for replication and comprehending the context of the research, and the methods section is essential. It has been observed that this stage is commonly included in abstracts at various educational levels, with particular steps in the technique typically appearing at high rates (Putri et al., 2021).

The second research questions of this research is what are the differences and similarities of article abstracts with different quartile values. The significant reference between the four quartiles value journal is about the total number of move per quartile. Q1 journal have the most frequent move, indicating a more comprehensive and detailed structure in their abstracts. Authors publishing in Q1 journals tend to include a greater variety of moves, ensuring that the abstracts provide a thorough representation of the research objectives, methodology, findings, and conclusions. This reflects the rigorous standards and broad readership expectations associated with high-impact journals, where a detailed abstract is essential to engage diverse audiences.

In contrast, journals in lower quartiles, such as Q3 and Q4, often feature abstracts with fewer moves. These abstracts prioritize simplicity and brevity, focusing primarily on the core elements; Purpose, Method, and Results. Despite the differences in complexity, all quartiles share similarities in adhering to conventional rhetorical structures, particularly the inclusion of essential moves to maintain clarity and coherence. This balance between differences and similarities highlights the adaptation of abstract structures to meet the varying expectations and audience scopes of journals across different quartile rankings.

This study in line with Kanafani (2022), who stated that there is a significant difference between Q1 and Q4. Almost all Q1 journals have complete moves in their abstracts, and these moves decrease as the quartile ranking of a journal decreases.

The findings differ from those of Kurniawan (2019), who stated that journal quartile does not necessarily affect the domination of the standard rules of RA abstracts' rhetorical organization and linguistic realizations in AL journals. Journal quartile did not necessarily affect the manifestation of all moves and steps based on the closely similar number of occurrences of three instituting steps in Method move and the obligatory status of Purpose and Findings moves.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aims to discover the rhetorical move in the RA's abstract and explore the most common pattern. It can be concluded as follows:

First, the construction of a research article abstract can involve considering five moves: Introduction, Aim/Purpose, Method, Result, and Conclusion. Among all moves, the dominant moves found in this research is the three moves, namely aim/purpose, method, and result, while the introduction and conclusion is less used. The cause of this difference might be caused by different requirement or standard that each journal has imposed implicitly and might be caused attributed to the tendency of researchers to emphasize the most critical information specifically, the aim/purpose, method, and result. These moves are often prioritized because they provide immediate insight into the study's relevance and contributions.

In contrast, the introduction and conclusion might be condensed or underrepresented due to the abstract's brevity and the need to focus on the core elements that attract readers' attention quickly. Then, the most common pattern found in this research is three moves pattern. The three-move pattern, comprising Aim/Purpose, Method, and Result, emerges as the most prevalent structure in research article abstracts. Its widespread use can be attributed to its comprehensive nature, which effectively organizes key research components in a logical and systematic manner. By focusing on these essential aspects, the pattern provides clarity and ensures that the research objectives, methodology, and findings are communicated succinctly and coherently.

This structured approach not only facilitates a better understanding of the research but also enhances its accessibility to readers. By offering a complete yet concise overview of the study, the three-move pattern serves as an effective framework for academic writing, guiding readers seamlessly through the core elements of the research. Its logical presentation makes it a preferred choice for presenting information in research abstracts.

Second, the differences between the move of research article abstract in different quartile value. Journals in Q1 tend to have more complete moves in their abstracts compared to those in other quartiles, reflecting the higher standards and broader readership they cater to. Q1 journals emphasize providing a comprehensive overview of the research, including all critical moves such as Introduction, Purpose, Method, Results, and sometimes Conclusion or Discussion. This thoroughness ensures that abstracts meet the expectations of diverse international readers who rely on detailed and well-structured abstracts to assess the study's relevance, reliability, and contribution to the field. The inclusion of all moves not only enhances clarity and coherence but also aligns with the strict editorial policies commonly upheld by Q1 journals.

In contrast, journals in lower quartiles (Q2, Q3, and Q4) often feature abstracts with fewer moves, prioritizing simplicity and brevity. These journals typically target a narrower or more specialized audience, allowing for a more streamlined presentation that focuses on core moves like Purpose, Method, and Results. While this approach is effective for specific readerships, it underscores the influence of quartile rankings on the rhetorical structure of abstracts. The difference in move completeness highlights the varying expectations, editorial standards, and audience scope across quartile levels, with Q1 journals prioritizing comprehensive abstracts to maintain their high impact and global relevance.

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