

## MOVES AND GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF RESEARCH ARTICLE ABSTRACTS

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### ARTICLE

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### ABSTRACT

Rhetoric in writing an abstract is required for the writers' goal which is to deliver adequate information to the readers by implementing an appropriate compositional structure of the abstract. This study aims to explore the use of grammatical construction of every rhetorical move in the research article abstracts. The result showed that grammatical constructions are found in the research article abstracts. The use of present tense is dominant in all five moves. Additionally, past tense is mostly found in method move. Active voice and passive voice are also found in all five moves. However, passive voice is frequently found in method and conclusion. In this case, the writers construct the abstract as objective as possible. *That*-complement clause is characteristically found in product move. Thus, implementation of this study is beneficial for the writers in academic writing to realize the use of grammatical constructions in the research article abstracts.

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### INTRODUCTION

Producing research article is the way how the writers communicate the knowledge to the members of relevant academic discourse community. To successfully write a good abstract, the writers have to be able to communicate the sufficient information of the research article in English. Zhang et al. (2012:127) states that the communicative purpose can be attained while the readers get a noticeable essence on the abstract of a research article.

To gain the communicative purpose of the abstract, rhetoric in writing an abstract is required for the writers' goal which is to deliver adequate information to the readers by implementing an appropriate compositional structure of the abstract.

In Pho's framework (2008) categorized moves into: situating the research, presenting the research, describing the methodology, summarizing the findings, and discussing the research. Similar with Hyland's Model (2000) establish the rhetorical moves of abstract into five moves consisting of Introduction (I), Purpose (P), method (M), Result (R), and Conclusion (C). Between Pho's and Hyland's model have identical structure but Hyland's model has been applied in a lot of inquiries in different genres, disciplines, and languages.

On the other side, some scholars have also investigated rhetorical moves and linguistic features of abstracts (Esfandiari, 2014; Chalak&Norouzi, 2013; &Zhang 2012). From those research, the findings show that every research article has their characteristic in using tense, some of them use present tense as the common tense, however, others use past tense to emphasize the research had been conducted. Passive voice is also found rapidly on that research. Graetz in Zhang et.al (2012:129) categorizes tense construction of abstract dominantly using passive voice and avoiding superlative, adjective, worthless expression, repetition, etc.

Some linguistics features in the abstract have been investigated into several scholars in different classification. In a complete grouping, Pho's work (2008) categorizes linguistic features into nine aspects: grammatical subjects, verb tense and aspect, voice, modal auxiliaries and semi-modal verbs, epistemic adjectives (adverbs and nouns), reporting verbs, *that*-complement clauses, self-reference words, and stance expressions. In current study, in Zhang's work (2014) establishes six linguistic features comprising into two categories, the grammatical features including voice, tense, and *that*-complements; and interactional meta discourse devices including hedges, attitudinal stance markers, and self-reference words. In the other hand, Hyland and Tse (2005) also investigate *that*-complement clauses as an interpersonal feature to outline attitudinal meaning within a clause. This study will also investigate the grammatical constructions that derive as follows: verb tense (the use of present tense and past tense), voice (active and passive voice), *that* complement clauses.

## METHOD

To examine grammatical constructions of research article abstracts, the researcher employs corpus linguistics as research method with corpus based-approach (Baker, 2010). This study employs corpus based approach. The approach of this corpus study applies both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative approach is implemented in analyzing the data by a corpus toolkit AntConc 3.2.4w. The qualitative approach is implemented to explain the way the writers use grammatical constructions in every move. The subject of the study is 29 abstracts written by English Language Teaching students published in *Jurnal Pendidikan Humaniora (JPH)*.

Afterward, to analyze the data, the researcher utilizes AntConc 3.2.4w corpus toolkit to identify the frequency of the occurrences. AntConc3.2.4w corpus toolkit is employed to find out grammatical construction: voice, tense, and that-complement. Firstly, it takes a look on the wordlist of the data which has been entered to the software. Afterward, the identification result of grammatical constructions will be tabulated.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of grammatical constructions reveal that voice, tense, and *that*-complement clause are found in the research article abstracts. The frequency of occurrence of the features occurs in each move because not all moves are constructed in the abstracts. The researcher utilizes AntConc Corpus Toolkit to find out grammatical constructions. The findings of grammatical constructions are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1 The Use of Grammatical Constructions in Moves**

Move Types	I	P	M	R	C	Total
<b>Total number of abstracts containing the move types</b>	4	29	29	29	7	
<b>Active voice</b>	4	38	25	59	9	135
<b>Passive voice</b>	1	16	84	16	12	129
<b>Present tense</b>	3	50	45	56	19	173
<b>Past tense</b>	1	16	96	46	3	162
<b><i>That</i>-complement</b>	-	-	3	36	7	46

Firstly, grammatical constructions of the research article abstracts are divided into three aspects; the use of voices, tenses, and that-complement. The identification results show surprising findings. The use of active voice is found in all moves particularly in introduction, purpose, and result. In the other hand, passive voice is dominantly found in all moves especially in method and conclusion. Meanwhile, the use of present tense is frequently used in all moves especially in purpose, result, and conclusion. But the use of past tense was is commonly found in method and result. For the result of identification of *that*-complement, it is found in method, result and conclusion. The researcher investigates verbs, phrases, and sentences which relies on the grammatical constructions and tabulate the identification results in Appendix 9. There are some words are categorized based on the application of each move of the abstracts.

Here, the discussion of the frequency of words found in the abstracts categorized as some types of grammatical constructions. The findings show that active voice and passive voice is commonly used in all five moves of abstracts. However, active voice was frequently used rather than passive voice. From the total number of word are considered as voice counted 264 words, whereas active voice are 135 words and passive voice are 129 words. Though, the total number of words in active voice and active voice are not significantly different. To distinguish the use of active and passive voice, it can be seen from the use of voice in each move which the findings show significant differences. For instance, the use of active voice is frequently used in three moves which are M1-introduction, M2-purpose and m4-result. Whereas, the use of passive voice is significantly employed in two moves which are method and conclusion. The results are similar with Zhang's study (2012) shows that the use of active voice is dominant in M1 and M2.

In introduction section, active voice was dominantly found rather than passive voice. Although, it was only found four words of active voice, it occurs because M1-situating the research or introduction is rarely implemented in the research article abstract.

*Every year, most of the fifth-semester students in the Accounting Department, State Poly-technic of Malang always had a problem in writing English abstracts. [02/02/02/SB]*

Active voice was used twice as frequently in the abstracts as the passive voice in Move 2-Purpose. This study is comparable with Zhang's study (2012) which also has twice as

frequently in the abstracts of the use of active voice. Furthermore, this study has similar result, M2-purpose is characterized using the phrase *this study, the research, this paper* followed by the lexical signals of the move such as *improve, aim, explore, investigate, describe, etc.*

*The study investigates if the extensive reading activity is effective in improving students' reading comprehension achievement and if there is any interaction between the extensive reading and the students' reading motivation. [02/01/03/SE]*

*This research aims to identify the implementation of metacognitive strategy to improve EFL of students' reading comprehension of the English Department at University of Timor in an analytical exposition text. [02/04/02/MM]*

*This paper reports a study which investigated the effect of scaffolding techniques on students' writing achievement. [03/03/02/YV]*

In contrast, the use of passive voice was commonly found in method section than active voice. This method move is the highest of the use of passive voice in the abstracts which three times more as frequently. However, the findings of Pho's study (2008) shows that all moves of applied linguistic abstracts repetitively employ active voice than passive voice particularly in M3-metho. This tendency happens while the researcher seems more interpersonal on what the research subject did. In the other hand, Zhang's study (2012) deals with this present study. Method is characterized by using passive voice because of the researcher's objectivity. The researcher provides how the steps of study conducted as objective as possible. Here, he following example is taken from the corpus:

*The research and development (R&D) procedure was employed in this study. [01/03/01/IMD]*

*A cross-sectional survey design and systematic random sampling strategy were applied to take 227 research respondents. [01/03/02/AS]*

*A quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest and nonrandomized control group design was used. [03/02/03/ES]*

Furthermore, the frequency of the use of active voice to passive voice was much higher in Move 4-product in the abstracts. It occurs that the use of words as the lexical signals such as "*show, reveal, find, improve, etc...*" are frequently found following the words "*the study, this research, the result of the study, the findings...*" The use of active voice indicates on what the research has conducted on the object of the research to report the result of the study.

*The findings revealed that the teachers exposed their identity in different ways for both different roles and local positioning which were culturally, socially, politically, and religiously constructed. [01/01/01/MS]*

*The result of the study indicated that speed reading and extensive reading activities benefited students by making them aware of using certain strategy to understand the meaning of text quickly. [02/03/02/SW]*

The last is the use of passive voice was commonly used than passive voice. The findings are not significantly different by total number of active voice are twelve words and passive voice are nine words. Based on Zhang's study (2012) reveals that conclusion move employs active voice.

Conclusion move is to present the interpretation beyond the result of study such as providing the implication of the study. Therefore, this present subject prefers to employ passive voice in order to convince the readers of the empirical findings. For instance, corpus data shows how passive voice is employed in this move, as follows:

*After evaluating all the data, it can be concluded that the DWA was successfully done in class 3A, semester 5, the Accounting Department, State Polytechnic of Malang. [02/02/02/SB]*

*Thus, it can be concluded that scaffolding techniques can significantly improve the students' writing achievement. [03/03/02/YV]*

Interestingly, the findings of the use of tense can be seen from the frequency of occurrences of each move which show that present tense and past tense are commonly found in all five moves. However, present tense is dominantly found in the abstract moves. It is frequently used in four moves which are introduction, purpose, result and, and conclusion. According to Esfandiari (2014) in his research findings show that all move of applied linguistic abstracts employ present tense in all five moves. It is influenced by the procedure of displaying the findings in the abstracts. In the other side, past tense is mostly found in Method move.

In M1-situating the research, present tense and past tense were employed but in small number due to the limited introduction move in the abstracts. There are no significant findings of this move, the researcher compose opening statement to strengthen the purpose of the study. However, present tense was significantly employed rather than past tense in Move 2-purpose. The total number of present tense counted 50 words while past tense only

16 words. Move 2-purpose is to outline the aims of the research. Therefore, the purpose move conveys relevant statement based on the intentions of the study. This present findings are in line with of Tseng's study that Move 2-purpose uses present tense. The realization of present tense and past tense perhaps occurs because of the disciplinary variations emphasizing on the use of verb tense.

*The study intends to describe the level of certified EFL teachers' self-assessment of their competence to teach English. [01/03/02/AS]*

*The study investigates if the extensive reading activity is effective in improving students' reading comprehension achievement and if there is any interaction between the extensive reading and the students' reading motivation. [02/01/03/SE]*

Otherwise, the use of past tense is commonly used in M3-method. It is the only move which frequently employed past tense in the research article abstracts. This study has similar findings with Chalak&Norouzi (2013) that reveal Move 3- method typically used past tense. The usage of past tense in method move is influenced by the researcher's objectiveness of the study. It is supported by the statement of Tseng (2011) states that Move 3-method characteristically employs past tense. After the results have been found, the method section should be in past tense form to convince the readers that the research has been successfully done.

*The Research and Development (R & D) procedure was employed to perform the whole process of the development and validation. With the reading material developed available, young learners are supposed to enjoy reading their own choice at their own pace as they are put into a free voluntary reading program. [02/01/02/UPA]*

*The data of this study were taken from the undergraduate students' research articles of English Department at State University of Malang and analyzed based on the taxonomy of Hyland (1998a) and Hinkel (2005). [03/02/02/AMM]*

Moreover, the use of present tense and past tense were not significantly different in Move 4-purpose. The total numbers of present tense words were 56 than past tense were 46. Surprisingly, non-native writersemployes present tense in product move because they prefer to use past tense. In this case, non-native writers have followed native writing convention in the research article abstract. They are willing to show current applicability of the findings (Chalak&Norouzi, 2013). The writers use present tense in product move that the function is to give a broad view of the findings. Pho's study (2008) also finds out that present tense

employed in product move proposed to make the finding as objective as possible. In the other hand, she finds that present tense in product move generalize beyond the findings of the study accepted by varied communities.

*The results of the study show that there were: (1) improvement of the students' participation; (2) improvement of the students' writing ability. [03/03/01/SM]*

*The results show that the implementation of this technique can improve the students' reading ability. [02/01/01/MM]*

In Move 5-conclusion, the use of present tense is often used than the use of past tense. Although, a small number of past tense words found in conclusion move but there is a significant difference of the total number of words which present tense words counted 19 words then past tense counted three words. Move 5 aims to interpret the results to widely apply to further research, such as in the following examples:

*Thus, it can be concluded that scaffolding techniques can significantly improve the students' writing achievement. [03/03/02/YV]*

*It is recommended that the English teachers use the mind mapping strategy to improve their students' writing, and the future researchers are suggested to conduct further studies related to the use of mind mapping strategy. [03/04/02/HH]*

The findings of using *that*-complement clauses are frequently used in product move. The others two moves are rarely found *that*-complement clauses in method and conclusion. However, it is absent in introduction and purpose move. From the corpora, the usages of *that*-complements clauses in product move are influenced by the use of sentences that explain what the results of study have found to be announced to the reader. Therefore, the use of *that*-complement clauses have specific characteristic in the form of sentences structure. Pho (2008) proposes that the use of *that*-complement clauses typically in Move 4-result. This study is also in line with Zhang's study (2012), the findings reveal that Move 4-product enlightened to use such characteristic expressions as follows:

*"The result of the study revealed that the clear and applicable procedures of guessing strategy in handling the unknown..." [01/01/03/SM]*



The expressions such as *'the result of the study revealed, the findings show that, etc...'* announce the primary findings of the study. Therefore, Hyland and Tse (2005) explain that *that*-complement is a significant lexical signal in which to highlight by remarking and evaluating.

## CONCLUSION

Grammatical constructions are investigated in this study. Active voice is frequently used in three moves which are M1-introduction, M2-purpose and M4-result. Whereas, the use of passive voice is significantly employed in two moves which are method and conclusion. From the results of tense identification, present tense is significantly used in all moves particularly in four moves in high frequency which are introduction, purpose, result, and conclusion. However past tense is commonly found in method move. Additionally, *that*-complement clauses are frequently used in product move. The others two moves are rarely found *that*-complement clauses in method and conclusion.

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