



Move Analysis of English Research Article Abstracts in the Scopus-indexed Journal

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Abstract

An abstract is widely on-going attention as a typical request from several publishers. Then, having a well-written abstract would be advantageous in several ways, including saving the work of journal editors and researchers. However, research that has investigated the lexical bundles in each move based on English research article (RA) abstracts in different contexts, particularly providing the insight into the moves occurred in the Scopus-indexed journals, is lacking. This study, therefore, investigated i) the frequency of move occurrence in English research article abstracts and ii) the lexical bundles in each move. The corpus consisted of 48 RA abstracts in the Language Learning Journal indexed by Scopus (Quartile 1) which were published online. The findings revealed that all the five moves are conventional. Regarding the lexical bundles in each move, the same phrases which were used by different abstracts were analyzed further. Then the data obtained was used as a source to contribute pedagogical implications and enhance academic and career advancement.

Keywords: Move analysis, Research article abstracts, Scopus-indexed journals



I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, publications are essential to professional lives. It appears to be a way of informing other scholars about recently discovered information (Martin, 2003; Yoon & Casal, 2020). It is acceptable that academics are more competitive to publish their manuscripts in journals with respectable indexes (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 2016; El-Dakhs, 2018; Hyland & Jiang, 2019).

Furthermore, it has been found that one of the most important parts of a research paper is the abstract, which is a summary of the entire work (Branson, 2004; Cargill & O'Connor, 2009; Derntl, 2014; Lores, 2004). Publishers typically require the abstract to be written at the start of the paper. The definitions of the abstract section include, for example, "a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the article; it allows readers to survey the contents of an article quickly and, like a title, it enables persons interested in the document to retrieve it from abstracting and indexing databases" (American Psychological Association, 2010). It has been also defined as "an abbreviated, accurate representation of the contents of a document, preferably prepared by its author(s) for publication with it" (Bhatia, 1993). Additionally, it is the readers' first interaction with the paper and frequently the moment at which they choose to pay attention to the accompanying article or disregard it (Hyland, 2002). Regarding the discourse structure, different parts of the texts enact different communicative functions, and word choices (Tankó, 2017). It seems clear that having a well-written abstract would be advantageous in several ways, including time savings for journal editors and researchers. Despite the increased demand for research paper abstracts, it is still reasonable for inexperienced authors to find it difficult to compose a compelling one (Can, Karabacak, & Qin, 2016; Kaya & Yagiz, 2020; Laosrattanachai & Laosrattanachai, 2023; Phuong, 2018; Saidi & Talebi, 2021).

Based on the studies conducted in the past, it was discovered that the common issues with writing abstracts are concerned the word choice including the structure and patterns (Amnuai, 2019; Kanafani, Kurniawan, & Lubis, 2022; Kaya & Yagiz, 2020; Phuong, 2018; Putra, 2023; Sukhapabsuk, 2021). One of the studies conducted by Kanafani et al. (2022), for example, aimed to examine the rhetorical organization and linguistic features of RA abstracts published in Scopus database within one applied linguistics journal. The quantitative method was used to conduct a statistical analysis on the occurrences of the moves and steps, whereas the qualitative method was utilized to identify and code the rhetorical moves and linguistic manifestation of the abstracts. The results showed a significant difference in the steps' occurrence and tense realization between the groups.

Although the results from those previous studies presented the moves in their corpus, it is rare to see the word choice occurring in each move. This paper, therefore, aims to fill the gap, particularly regarding the focus on lexical bundles in Quartile 1 journal abstracts by focusing on i) the frequency of move occurrence in English research article abstracts and ii) the lexical bundles in each move. It is expected that the data obtained from the study would be beneficial for the teachers in terms of using it as the guideline to implementing the teaching pattern in academic writing courses. Besides, the researchers who would like to i) establish the credibility of their work, ii) obtain the higher opportunity for the career progression and research grants, and iii) fulfill institutional goals, could make beneficial from the data of the study and use it as a tool to enhance them to publish their research articles in Scopus-indexed journals successfully.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Hyland's Model

The Hyland's model was proposed by Hyland (2000). One of his most influential works is related to genre analysis, where he identifies the key components of different academic genres (e.g., research papers, thesis/ dissertations, etc.) and how writers position themselves within these genres. Hyland's model suggests that academic writing is not just about presenting information but also about constructing an argument, engaging with the audience, and positioning oneself within the academic community. One of key features of Hyland's model includes rhetorical moves (see Table 1), a set of 'moves', which related to the stages that writers typically go through in various academic genres. For example, in

research articles, these moves might include establishing a research gap, reviewing literature, presenting results, and drawing conclusions. Each of these moves serves a specific purpose in constructing the text's argument.

B. Previous Studies

Several related studies have extended or adapted Hyland's model to different genres, languages, and academic disciplines, offering a deeper understanding of how academic writers strategically construct their texts to engage with readers, position their research, and contribute to scholarly conversations. A summary of the studies related to the current study is presented in chronological order (see Table 2).

Table 1: Hyland's classification (2000) of rhetorical moves in article abstracts

Move	Function
Move 1: Introduction (M1)	Establishing the context of the paper and motives the research or discussion
Move 2: Purpose (M2)	Indicating purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper
Move 3: Method (M3)	Providing information on design, procedures, assumption, approach, data, etc.
Move 4: Product (M4)	Stating main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished
Move 5: Conclusion (M5)	Interpreting or extending results beyond the scope of the paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications

Table 2: Summary of previous studies

Citation	Title	Results
Amnuai (2019)	Analyses of Rhetorical Moves and Linguistic Realizations in Accounting Research Article Abstracts Published in International and Thai-Based Journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both similarities and differences in terms of rhetorical move and linguistic realizations were revealed. - The use of tenses and voices was quite different not only between the two corpora but also from the previous studies.
Kaya and Yagiz (2020)	Move Analysis of Research Article Abstracts in the Field of ELT: A Comparative Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are no statistically significant differences in terms of moves between the two groups, Turkish scholars and non-Turkish scholars. - Three moves (purpose, method, product) frequently occurred in Turkish writers' abstracts while foreign writers include four moves (purpose, method, product, conclusion) more commonly in their abstracts.
Sukhapabsuk (2021)	A Genre Analysis of Linguistics Research Article Abstracts: A Comparative Study with Hyland's Moves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three moves (Purpose, Methodology, Result) were frequently used which are different from the model that proposed five moves (Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion).



Table 2: Summary of previous studies (Cont.)

Citation	Title	Results
Kanafani et al. (2022)	A Move Analysis of Abstracts in a Scopus-indexed Applied Linguistics Journal from Different Quartiles	- There is a significant difference in the steps' occurrence and tense realization between the groups.
Putra (2023)	Analysis of Moves and Tenses on Abstract Article Published at Journals	- Among 10 abstract articles, 7 abstract articles that applied the introduction, 9 abstract articles that applied purpose, 9 articles that applied method, and 10 abstract articles that applied product move then there are 4 abstract articles applied conclusion move. - In applying tense, the most used is simple present tense.

According to the literature review, move analysis has been employed to study abstracts in various settings. The results mostly focus on the movement patterns across different contexts. However, the use of alternative approaches for improving the writing of English research articles is rarely observed.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Corpus

The data source of this study consisted of 48 English research article abstracts published by Language Learning Journal which was published on behalf of the Association for Language Learning and was indexed by Scopus (Quartile 1). This particular journal was chosen due to its clear prominence as the only Language Learning journal in Thailand which was indexed by Scopus.

Since the current study would like to examine the latest moves, it covered all abstracts which were available online and published in 2024. Previous studies studying abstract writing (e.g., Amnuai, 2019; Kanafani et al., 2022; Kaya & Yagiz, 2020; Phuong, 2018; Putra, 2023; Sukhapabsuk, 2021) commonly concerned the structure and patterns, so the selected abstracts were deemed for addressing the research questions. Although the small size and the focus on a single journal seems the limitation of the study, the data revealed might be beneficial either for the novice researchers to develop their abstract writing to be published in Scopus-indexed journals or the

teachers to use the data as the starting point to motivate their students in the academic writing courses.

B. Research Instrument

This study aimed to examine 1) the frequency of move occurrence and steps in English research article abstracts and 2) the lexical bundles in each move. A coding scheme, adapted from Hyland's (2000) model, was developed for data analysis. Hyland's model was chosen because it has been widely used to study the abstract in the field of language learning (Amnuai, 2019; Can et al., 2016; Kanafani et al., 2022; Kaya & Yagiz, 2020; Putra, 2023; Sukhapabsuk, 2021).

Table 3: Code for move organization in this study (adapted from Hyland (2000) model)

Coding	Function
M1	Introduction: To establish the context of the paper and motives for the research.
M2	Purpose: To indicate purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper.
M3	Method: To provide information on design, procedures, approach, data analysis, etc.
M4	Product: To state results and the argument.
M5	Conclusion: To interpret or extend results beyond the scope of the paper, draw inferences, point to applications or wider implications.

Table 3 outlines the coding scheme for move organization used in this research. An open approach

was applied in the coding process. Since the length of the abstracts was limited, the study examined the move pattern excluding step which is one of the three concepts (e.g., move, step and genre analysis) in move analysis.

C. Data Collection and Data Analysis

All 48 English research article abstracts were coded using the developed scheme for identifying moves. Moves can vary in length and may be identified at the sentence, phrase, or clause level (Bhatia, 1993, 2002; Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Swales, 1990). After coding all the moves, the occurrences and patterns of the moves were analyzed and presented in terms of frequencies and percentages. The lexical bundles in each move were also identified.

To assess inter-coder reliability, 14 English research article abstracts (30% of the source texts) were randomly selected and coded by two coders. The first coder was the author of the study, while the second coder was a Thai university teacher with a doctoral degree in education and experience in this area of research. The second coder underwent extensive training to effectively apply the coding scheme. During the training, the second rater was explained about the background of the study and the detailed description of the five moves proposed by Hyland (2000).

While assessing, some points were clarified such as words frequently occurring in each move. After assessing, the percentage reliability based on the researcher and the independent rater was computed based on kappa statistic (Cohen, 1960). The percentage reliability was computed using the formula:

$$\frac{A}{T} \times 100 = \text{Agreement (\%)} \quad (1)$$

$$\frac{70}{70} \times 100 = 100$$

A = Total number of assignments agreed between the two raters

T = Total number of assignments

The result of 100% was identified. According to Suntara and Usaha (2013), 60% is a suitable percentage for the study, meaning that the five moves and linguistic features that appear in at least 60% are accepted as conventional, while those that occur in less than 60% are regarded as optional.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frequency of the five moves occurring in 48 English research article abstracts was examined in this study. Hyland's classification (2000) was used as the basis for the analysis of all the abstracts. The results were presented as follows.

A. Move Occurrence

Table 4: Frequency of move occurrence in English research article abstracts

Move	Numbers of abstracts containing moves (N=48)	Percentage (%)
Move 1: Introduction	38	79.16
Move 2: Purpose	47	97.91
Move 3: Method	47	97.91
Move 4: Product	46	95.83
Move 5: Conclusion	39	81.25

Table 4 demonstrates that every move is regarded as the conventional move because more than 60% of the 48 RA abstracts occurred. Additionally, it was found that Moves 2 – 4 occurred in all abstracts. These data are in line with several studies in the past (Kearttikul & Wimolkasem, 2017; Saidi & Talebi, 2021; Sukhapabsuk, 2021; Suntara & Usaha, 2013) which revealed that the three moves (Moves 2 – 4) in the abstracts were mainly focused by the researchers. This would suggest that Move 2 (Purpose), Move 3 (Method) and Move 4 (Product) might be essential part to be reported in abstracts (Can et al. 2016; Kaya, & Yagiz, 2020).

Table 5: Examples of lexical bundles in context of each move

Move	Examples of lexical bundle in context
Move 1: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>However</u>, the precise L1-L2 relationship is intricate and warrants further study. - Consequently, there is a <u>critical gap</u> in our knowledge regarding how bilinguals navigate and resolve competition dynamics during spoken word recognition in the context of language attrition. - Verbal Fluency (VF) task total scores are widely used in language attrition studies, <u>but they do not provide insight into</u> the processes underlying optimal performance. - While..., <u>little research exists</u>... - <u>Unfortunately</u>, such formulae only measure two (i.e. semantic, syntactic) of the many features that impact readability, leaving other features that require qualitative consideration (e.g. signal words, SWs) <u>unexplored</u>. <p><i>Remarks: Purpose of the words used is to show gap(s).</i></p>
Move 2: Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study <u>investigates</u>... - We address this issue by <u>focusing on</u>... - The study <u>aims to</u>... - This study <u>examines</u>... - This paper <u>fills that gap by</u>... <p><u>Move 2: Purpose + Move 3: Method</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We <u>explore</u> whether aspectual interpretations associated with the present tense may be a vulnerable area for the native grammar of <i>30 late Spanish-English bilinguals who have settled in the UK for over 15 years (M3)</i>. - <i>This qualitative study (M3)</i> <u>explored</u> the perceptions of EFL students at a Chinese university regarding collocation learning. - <i>The present mixed-method study (M3)</i> <u>focuses on</u>... - We <u>compare</u> the within-L1 and within-L2 competition mechanisms of <i>Spanish-English attriters (N = 65)</i> with two monolingual control groups (Spanish and English speakers). Participants completed two visual world tasks with manipulation of onset/rhyme overlap.
Move 3: Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall 68 Bulgarian <u>narratives</u> of 39 speakers were <u>analysed</u> as to ... - FL performance of <u>Greek learners</u> of French (N = 19) was assessed longitudinally (at the end of the instructional period and 12 months later) across two tasks: a C-test and a written narrative task. - <u>The participants</u> with comparable L2 proficiency but various degrees of L1 attrition who arrived at different ages and differed in their frequency of L1 use were recruited for the study. - <u>The participants</u> were 15 Chinese first-year non-English major students. The data consisted of <u>semi-structured interviews</u>... - <u>Data collection</u> relied on three interviews and four forum posts. Transcribed data were then coded using first and second cycle coding methods, and thematically analysed... - The programming language R was used to <u>analyse</u>...
Move 4: Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The results <u>reveal</u>... - Analysis of the transcripts of audio-recorded interviews <u>revealed</u> that... - Findings generally <u>showed</u> ... - Results <u>indicate</u>... - This analysis <u>illustrates</u>... - The inferential statistics <u>showed</u> that... - Findings <u>depict</u>...

Table 5: Examples of lexical bundles in context of each move (Cont.)

Move	Examples of lexical bundle in context
Move 4: Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First, we focus on L1 Finnish and L2 English performance M2 among attriters (N = 38). Our analyses <u>suggest</u> similar processes underlying performance in both languages. These processes seem to remain unaffected by immersion time in the L2 environment (LoR) and frequency of L1 use, highlighting the importance of including L2 data alongside comparisons to L1 monolingual populations to account for a broad bilingual effect in language attrition studies. M4 - Second, we compare attriters' and monolinguals' (N = 50) performance in L1 M2. Our findings <u>suggest</u> that attriters rely on clustering in PVF more systematically than monolinguals, and they struggle to initiate a search for a new subcategory or return to a previous category (switching) after depleting a cluster in PVF and SVF tasks. <p><u>Move 4: Product + Move 5: Conclusion</u> Our <u>finding</u> of no attrition for UK-based Spanish bilinguals <u>suggests</u> that...</p>
Move 5: Conclusion	<p>Shed light on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This article <u>sheds light on</u>... - Our findings highlight the role of bilingual experiences in modulating L1 competition dynamics, <u>shedding light on</u>... - The findings of the present study, therefore, <u>shed further light on</u>... <p>Suggest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The results <u>suggest</u>... - Findings allow us to deepen insights from former studies and <u>suggest</u> that... - By comparing L1 and L2 lexical diversity, syntactic complexity, and fluency, the study revealed that higher L2 proficiency was not associated with lower levels of L1 proficiency, <u>suggesting</u> that... <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ...could potentially <u>contribute to</u>... - Pedagogical <u>implications</u> are discussed. - This leads to a key strategic <u>recommendation</u> to...

B. Lexical Bundles of Each Move

In addition to the move frequency analysis, some examples of lexical bundles were also shown for each move.

As seen from Table 5, the words occurring in Move 1 (Introduction) mainly focused on showing the gap(s) of the study. Besides, the word 'suggest' occurred in Move 4 (Product), and Move 5 (Conclusion) may have different meaning. Based on the context in Move 4 (Product), 'suggest' may refer to 'show' or 'reveal', whereas the meaning of 'suggest' occurred in Move 5 (Conclusion) would be similar to 'recommend'. That could suggest that the meaning can be produced by the contexts (Anderson & Shifrin, 1980; Bolger, Balass, Landen & Perfetti, 2008;). It is notable that the same

words or phrases were used in the same way and purpose. That would be reasoned that each unit is devised according to its communicative functions, each of which uses specific structures, word orders, and word choices (Tankó, 2017).

V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The data obtained from the study; for example, all five moves are the conventional move for English research article abstracts, including the lexical bundles in each move was used as the basis to design the pattern for teaching writing research article abstracts in English. The proposed model of practical steps for implementing the teaching pattern in academic writing courses is presented in Figure 1.

The created teaching pattern is also presented below (see Table 6):

The findings of the study, move frequency in the RA abstracts and the lexical bundles in each appearing in

each move, could be used flexibly in each phase. It should be notable that all moves occurring in the abstract of the present study are regarded as conventional moves.

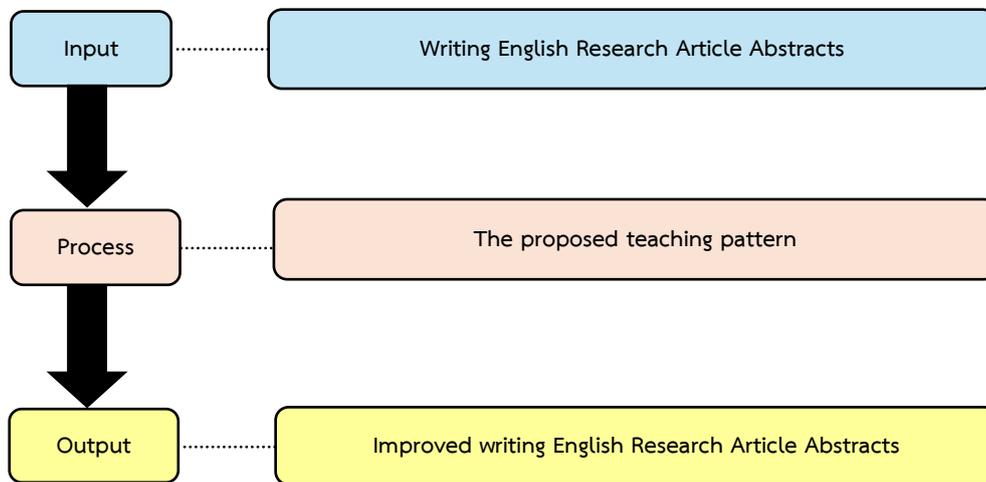


Figure 1: The Proposed Model to Enhance Abstract Writing

Table 6: The proposed model of practical steps for implementing the teaching pattern in academic writing courses

Step	Description	Teacher's role
I: Pre-phase	- Introduce to topic or lesson.	Formal authority
	- Establish learning goals, expectations and the content to students.	
	- Demonstrate the fundamental information that students must possess in order to do the assigned activity.	Expert
	- Introduce to the task and allow the students to ask if they have any questions.	
	- Show the students real-world examples from various contexts.	Personal model
	- Require the students to <i>work alone / in pairs / in groups (depends on the context)</i> to do the task by giving them the time limit.	Formal authority
II: During-phase	- Monitor while the students are doing the task.	Facilitator and Delegator
	- Answer questions in case the students are not clear for some points while doing the task.	
	- Suggest the students to learn how to seek help effectively from various sources, such as teachers, experts, friends who are skillful in the interested points, and the Internet.	
	- Ask the students present what they work to the class or exchange their written reports, and compare them.	Formal authority
	- Act as a chairperson and provide feedback.	Expert
III: Post-phase	- Summarize what the students learned	Expert and
	- Conduct practice of new words, phrases and patterns occurring in the data.	Formal authority

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to reveal the frequency of the five moves occurring in 48 English research article abstracts from the *Language Learning Journal*, Volume 52, Issues 1 and 6, published open access in 2024. It was found that all moves occurred are the conventional ones. The examples of lexical bundles were also revealed. According to the data of the study, it was used as the source to create the teaching pattern to develop writing research article abstracts in English based on the combination of the task-based learning framework (Willis, 1996), and teaching styles (Grasha, 1996). Since the study's limitations, such as the small sample size and single-journal focus, were found, contributing the bright avenue for future research, such as adding cross-disciplinary comparisons and larger dataset analyses, was suggested to reinforce the practical implications of the findings for academic writing instruction.

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