

GENRE ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH FINAL PROJECT ABSTRACTS WRITTEN BY THE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF IKIP PGRI SEMARANG

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4 GENRE ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH FINAL PROJECT ABSTRACTS
WRITTEN BY THE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
OF IKIP PGRI SEMARANG

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ABSTRACT

This study is specifically focused on the student final project abstract based on genre analysis which covers the study of the generic structure and the linguistic features. The statements of the study are: (1). How do the students of English Education Department of IKIP PGRI Semarang realize the generic structure in their final project abstracts (2). How do they realize the linguistic features in their final project abstracts, and (3). What is the contribution of the result of the study to the English Education Program of IKIP PGRI Semarang. The main purpose of this study is to find out the generic structure and linguistic features of the final project abstracts and analyze the contribution of this study to the English Department. This study applies the descriptive qualitative method. The object of this study is the final project abstracts written by English Education Department students of 'IKIP PGRI Semarang'. The total of 10 final projects formed the data of this study. The data of the study were analyzed using the genre analysis approach. The first step of data analysis was identifying the Moves which was done by using Linguistic evidence and understanding the texts. The finding shows that only some of the final project abstracts made by the students of IKIP PGRI applied the five Moves. It is found that two Moves are applied in all abstracts, they are Purpose and Method Moves (100%). Situating the research is used in five abstracts (50%). Meanwhile the third move that is the Result Move used in eight abstracts (80%). The Conclusion Move found in five abstracts (50%). The result of the analysis showed that two personal pronouns were found in the final project abstracts. Personal pronouns such as 'the writer' and 'the researcher' were found in all of the abstracts. Personal pronoun 'she' was found in one abstract. Finally, there are only five expressions of hedges that are used in the final project abstracts, they are modal auxiliary verbs, adjectival, adverbial, nominal and Approximators of degree. The suggestions toward this study are (1) The English lecturers should introduce how to create a meaningful text, particularly the abstract as the representation of the research report in good structure for the students based on the theory of genre. (2) The lecturers should improve the teaching and learning process relating to the improvement of academic writing, in this case lecturers who in charge of teaching academic writing. (3) The final project supervisors should put a high concern of genre to be applied in writing the abstract of the final project during the supervision. (4) The English Education department should provide a precise guideline for final project writing.

Key words: genre, final project, abstract.

ABSTRAK

Secara khusus, penelitian ini menekankan pada analisis genre abstrak berbahasa Inggris sebagai tugas akhir mahasiswa. Analisis ini meneliti struktur jenerik dan fitur linguistik. Perumusan masalah dalam penelitian ini adalah (1) bagaimana mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP PGRI Semarang memahami struktur jenerik abstrak sebagai tugas akhirnya, (2) bagaimana mahasiswa memahami fitur linguistik abstrak sebagai tugas akhirnya, dan (3) bagaimana kontribusi temuan penelitian pada Program Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP PGRI Semarang. Tujuan utamanya adalah struktur jenerik dan fitur linguistik abstrak sebagai tugas akhir mahasiswa dan menganalisis kontribusi penelitian ini pada Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Objek penelitian adalah penulisan abstrak sebagai tugas akhir yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP PGRI Semarang. Jumlah data penelitian ini mencapai 100. Data tersebut dianalisis dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis genre. Langkah awal penelitian ini adalah mengidentifikasi Moves dengan menggunakan pembuktian Linguistik dan memahami teks. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa hanya beberapa abstrak yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa IKIP PGRI menerapkan lima Moves. Ditemukan bahwa dua Moves diterapkan pada semua abstrak. Kedua Moves tersebut adalah Purpose Move dan Method Move (100%). Move yang ketiga yang merupakan Result Move digunakan dalam delapan abstrak (80%). Conclusion Move ditemukan dalam lima abstrak (50%). Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa dua personal pronouns diemukan dalam abstrak sebagai tugas akhir. Personal pronouns seperti writer (penulis) dan researcher (peneliti) ditemukan dalam semua abstraks. Personal pronoun 'she' ditemukan dalam satu abstrak. Hanya ada lima ungkapan hedges yang digunakan dalam abstrak. Kelima ini adalah modal auxiliary verbs, adjectival, adverbial, nominal dan approximators of degree. Disarankan bahwa (1) dosen bahasa Inggris semestinya memperkenalkan bagaimana menulis suatu teks yang bermakna, khususnya teks abstrak sebagai representasi laporan riset dengan struktur yang berdasarkan teori genre. (2) Dosen seharusnya memperbaiki proses pembelajaran yang terkait dengan pengembangan academic writing. Dalam kasus ini dosen yang mengajar matakuliah academic writing. (3) 'Pembimbing' tugas akhir seharusnya lebih memberikan perhatian pada genre untuk menulis abstrak sebagai tugas akhir selama bimbingan. (4) Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris menyediakan panduan.

Kata Kunci: genre, tugas akhir, abstrak

1. Introduction

Teaching English as a second language refers to teaching students whose first language is not English, while language learning involves the learning of several skills. 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 writ-

ing. Good writing usually requires good grammar and organization. Grammar feature in writing must fulfill a rhetorical function such as verbal complementation, nominalization, the use of definite articles, relative clauses, tenses, subject-verb number agreement, and cohesive devices such as lexical repetition, referential pronouns, conjunctions, synonyms and substitutes (Haliday and Hasan, 1976: 90). 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). IKIP PGRI (Teacher Training Institute) also requires the students to write the final project in English. 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.

As the researchers did a pre-survey on the submission of final projects in English Education Department in IKIP PGRI Semarang, researchers found that in the second period of the graduation, particularly in October as the due date of submission, there were around 25 final projects submitted. As the students of English department have already done the writing courses for several semesters, it is assumed that the students have a sufficient knowledge on writing and have competence in producing a text especially the final projects. It is considered that the students should be able to produce a final projects. From that fact, researchers intended to study the students' academic writing especially on the abstract.

The fact has triggered me to conduct a study on the students' academic writing, par-

ticularly on the abstract. Specifically, researchers will focus on the students final project 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 due to some factors, each of the course is conducted for around fourteen to sixteen meetings and the focus of each course varies differently. In this study, researchers will not take the whole courses as the object of the study.

Considering the phenomena and the facts exist, the researchers state the problems in the following research questions; how do the students of English Education Department of IKIP PGRI Semarang realize the generic structure in their final project abstracts?, how the students of English Education Department of IKIP PGRI Semarang do realize the linguistic features in their final project abstracts? and what is the contribution of the result to the English Education Program of IKIP PGRI Semarang?

Martin (in Eggins 1994: 26) says that genre is "a stage, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture". 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 mentions 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.

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 Swales (1990:46) that “the principal criteria feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is a shared set of communicative purposes”. Similarly, Bhatia (cited in Safnil, 2000: 5) states that communicative purposes are reliable to be the criterion in determining a genre as well as to distinguish it from other genres. Thus, the communicative purposes are of primary importance in creating a genre (Lakic, 2000).

According to Eggins (1994: 36), generic structure is “the stages, step by step organization of the genre”. While Hyland (2002: 62) defines generic structure” as the prototypical sequences of writers’ meaning move through in a text to achieve a particular purpose”. 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.

Safnil (2000: 86) notes 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’. Meanwhile Dudley-Evans (cited in Safnil, 2000:87) defines a Move as ‘...a semantic unit which is

related to the writers’ purpose. Another definition by Ngowu (noted by Safnil only) adds the constituent elements of Move may consist of a number of constituent elements called steps.

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. Based on some previous studies on abstracts conducted by Bhatia, Santos, and Salager-Meyer (Samraj, 2002: 34), steps are not found in this genre so, the genre of abstracts only consists of a series of Moves.

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.

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.

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.

Samraj (2002: 42) notes that past tense is usually used for purpose, methods and results. 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. Samraj (2002: 7) supported Salager-Meyer's when in her study she found that the uses of tenses are varied.

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 (in Hyland, 2002: 103), the use of personal subjects in academic writing reveals overt acceptance of personal responsibility for the claims being made.

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:

- a. Modal Auxiliary verbs, for example like may, might, can, could, should, would.
- b. 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
- c. 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)
- d. Approximators of degree, quantity and time, for instance approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally, generally, usually, somewhat, somehow, a lot of
- e. Introductory phrases, like I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that, we feel that
- f. "if" clause, for example if true, if anything

g. ⁵ 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 Hyland (cited in Samraj, 2002:54)

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.

Since the final project abstracts in this study are written by 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 communicat¹² 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.

2. Research 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 oriented¹³ according to Isaac and Michael (1997: 46) 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. 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.

The object of this study was the final project abstracts written by English Education Department students of ‘IKIP PGRI Semarang’. 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.

To analyze the schematic 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 Safmil (2000: 8) 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". 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.

1. Data and source of data

The sources of data for this study will be in the form of documents; they were ten final project abstracts. Furthermore, the data for this study will be the written texts. Those written texts are ten final project abstracts written by the students of IKIP PGRI Semarang from the recent final project submission of the graduation period of 2009. The reason is that because by choosing purposively, I will be able to generalize the data rather than taking them all. For this reason, I consider that ten abstracts taken from ten final projects will be sufficient and cover the data needed.

The data of this study were sentences in the final project abstracts. I became the data collector and used a close look of evaluation of the generic structure and the linguistic features of abstracts in the final projects. 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:

- a. Taking 10 abstracts from 10 English final projects of English Department.
- b. Writing down those chosen abstracts to be analyzed.

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 and linguistic features. The analysis was continued to see how the result of the analysis of the genre contribute to the teaching of writing in English Education Department of IKIP PGRI Semarang.

The data of the study were analyzed using the genre approach. The steps of the data analysis are as follows: reading the English final project abstracts to get a rough understanding about the schematic structure and linguistic features of the abstracts, identifying the stages inside the abstracts in this case defined as Moves found in the abstracts and identifying the linguistic features of the abstracts which include tense, personal pronoun, and hedges.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 Generic Structure of the Final Project Abstracts

The generic structure displayed by the final project 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 generic structure of the English Final Projects 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

| Moves | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1. Situating the Research | 5 | 50% |
| 2. Purpose | 10 | 100% |
| 3. Methods | 10 | 100% |
| 4. Result | 8 | 80% |
| 5. Conclusion | 5 | 50% |

3.2 The Linguistic Features of the Final Project Abstracts

3.2.1 The Use of Tenses in the Final Project Abstracts

The findings resulted from the data analy-

sis can be seen in the following tables. The first finding was the use of tenses in the final project abstracts. 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

| 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
- P : Purpose Move
- M : Methods Move
- R : Result Move
- C : Conclusion Move

3.2.2 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.

The table above shows the findings of per-

sonal pronouns which were 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.

Table 3

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

3.3.3 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 ab-

stracts 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9. The expressions of hedges ²⁵ are found in various moves. The hedges found in the data can be seen in the following table. The table shows that only some of the hedges expressions were found in the Moves of the abstracts.

| No | Expression of Hedges | Number of Abstract | Moves |
|----|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1 | Modal auxiliary verbs | 6 | C |
| 2 | Modal lexical verb | - | - |
| 3 | Adjectival, adverbial and nominal | 1, 3, 9 | M, C, S |
| 4 | Approximators of degree | 3, 5, 6 | C, S, M |
| 5 | Introductory Phrases | - | - |
| 6 | 'If' Clause | - | - |
| 7 | Compound Hedges | - | - |

4. 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. While 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.

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