

Rhetorical Structures of Introduction Sections in Sinta-Indexed Journals

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Abstract

This discourse study examines the rhetorical structures of RA introductions in Sinta 1 indexed ELT journals by implementing the Swales' (2004) CARS model as the framework for analysis. A corpus consisting of 36 RA introductions was randomly collected from three SINTA 1 indexed journals, namely TEFLIN, SiELE, and IJAL, in 2019-2021. The analysis was done by using top-down analysis. The findings of the study indicated that all three moves, i.e., Move 1 Establishing a territory, Move 2 Establishing a niche, and Move 3 Presenting the present work, appeared in the introduction section across three journals. Although not all authors presented the moves and steps in appropriate sequences, the structures of moves and steps found in the corpus data were based on Swales' CARS model. It is highly suggested that EFL students follow the Swales' CARS model in writing an introduction.

Keywords: *introduction section, research article, rhetorical move, SINTA-indexed journal*

Introduction

In line with the Minister of Education decree (Number: B/B.B1/SE/2019), Indonesian university students, such as graduate students, must produce publishable English research articles before graduation. They are expected to conduct research and publish their research works in the targeted journals, both nationally and internationally accredited, with their faculty mentors. Writing English RAs to be published in reputable journals is troublesome for Indonesian researchers. They still adopt the Indonesian rhetorical style academically and culturally, leading to an unsuccessful publication (Arsyad, 2016; Arsyad & Adila, 2017). Another cause might come from the introduction composition considered the most challenging part to write for (non-)native speakers (Swales & Feak, 2012). Kheryadi (2018) mentioned that many students face difficulty composing the introduction section, especially in terms of argument justification.

Besides the difficulties mentioned above, the introduction section of a journal is essential after the abstract in a RA to entice readers' attention to read the article entirely (Safnil, 2013; Swales & Najjar, 1987). It provides the background knowledge that readers need to comprehend how the paper's findings contribute to the current knowledge in the field (Wallwork, 2016, p. 250). A good introduction section should cover at least these three major points, namely the general topic of the article, the issue addressed in the study, and the solution of the target problems (Armağan, 2013). The author can develop

the main points to be included in the introduction by answering the following questions sequentially, namely “(a) what is the problem? (b) are there any existing solutions (i.e., in the literature? (c) Which solution is the best? (d) What is its main limitation? (e) What do I hope to achieve? and (e) Have I achieved what I set out to do?” (Wallwork, 2016, p. 251). Furthermore, Swales and Feak (2012) also share that the introduction section has two primary functions: to present a logical reason for research and persuade readers to read it. Thus, the introduction section should be written as interesting and convincing as possible.

“Create-a-Research-Space (CARS) model is one of the move models proposed by Swales (1990) can be used as the guidelines to write a RA introduction. This model is a powerful approach that has been used throughout a discourse community in English academic writing as it “... primarily reflects research in a big world, in big fields, in big languages, with big journals, big names, and big libraries” (Swales, 2004, p. 226). To make the model more applicable for any type of RA introduction, this CARS model has been updated by establishing some adjustments to the steps of each move for different disciplines (Yasin & Qamariah, 2014). Thus, the modified version of Swales’ CARS model is commonly known as the Swales’ (2004) CARS model (Briones, 2012).

The Swales’ (2004) CARS model consists of three specific rhetorical moves where each move has several stages. The first move (M1), which is called *establishing a territory*, functions to claim the topic area of study and provide arguments of previous research (Swales & Feak, 2012). The author in this move needs to narrow the topic from general to specific and review earlier research to support the topic being studied. In this move, the author also provides arguments of previous research to support the topic. It is why citations are required in this move (Swales, 2004). This move has only one step, namely *Topic generalizations of increasing specificity* (Step 1). Some examples of signals to indicate this step are ... *has become an important aspect of...*, *investigators have recently turned to...*, and *there has been wide interest in...* (Swales, 1990, p. 144).

The next move is *establishing a niche* (M2) that has the purpose of arguing a space from the existing studies that need further investigation and develop the knowledge to specify the idea being discussed in the present research. This move can be realized through two stages where in the first step the author might include *indicating a gap* (Step 1A) or *adding to what is known* (Step 1B). While for the second step (Step 2), the author can accommodate presenting a positive justification step that elaborates the present study's importance and usefulness. Several lexical and syntactical signals to indicate this move are as follows: a question remains whether ... , both suffer from the dependency on ... , and few investigations have been conducted ... (John M. Swales, 1990, p. 154). As Swales (2004) proposed, some citations are possible in this move, and Step 2 is included as optional. The third move (M3) is named as presenting the present work. In this move, the author has to describe what the study will accomplish precisely. This move has one obligatory step - announcing current research descriptively and/or purposively (Step 1), three optional steps - presenting research questions or hypotheses (Step 2), definitional clarifications (Step 3), and summarizing methods (Step 4), and three other steps that belong to PISF (probable in some fields) - announcing principal outcomes (step 5), stating the value of the present research (Step 6), and outlining the structure of the paper (Step 7). Hence, the Swales’ (2004) CARS model is applied in this study as the framework for analysis.

Studies on the structure of RA introduction have been extensively conducted by researchers in the area of discourse analysis. First, Qamariah & Wahyuni (2017) analyzed the structure of RA introduction by using Swales' CARS model as the framework. The result of the study portrayed the actualization of Swales CARS model in the introduction section. Another study with a similar framework was also conducted by Indrian and Ardi (2019), who identified the rhetorical structures of an English primary thesis written by an undergraduate student. They implemented top-down analysis in analyzing the data and found that all three moves were present in the undergraduate theses. However, the difference was found in terms of lexical and syntactical signals.

Moreover, by using the modified Swales CARS model (2004) as the framework for analysis, Rochma, Triastuti, and Ashadi (2020) investigated the rhetorical styles of RA introductions in the field of English language teaching. The analysis results came up with two obligatory moves, namely, Step 2 of Move 1 and Step 1B of Move 2. However, some steps of each move were absent due to the scarce control and linguistic resources. Furthermore, Kawase (2018) analyzed the rhetorical structure of the introduction section in applied linguistics PhD theses. He used Bunton's (2002) model as the framework. The findings revealed that most of the introduction sections in applied linguistic articles possess three moves. Lastly, Luthfianda, Kurniawan, and Gunawan (2021) investigated RA introduction sections written by Indonesian scholars published in soft and hard science international journals focusing on the similarities and differences of the rhetorical patterns. The analysis result revealed that Step 1 of Move 3 was obligatory while Step 1B of Move 2 and Step 2 of Move 3 were absent in both corpora.

Despite a plethora of research on discourse analysis, scant attention has been paid to the rhetorical structure of RA introduction focusing on the field of English language teaching. Although Rochma et al. (2020) have researched on it, they used the four-stage approach proposed by Safnil (2013) for data analysis rather than a top-down analysis which is suggested by Biber, Connor, and Upton (2007) for conducting a corpus-based analysis. Further, while research on the national journal has commonly focused on the abstract section (Zulfa & Kurniawan, 2020), little attention has been given to the introduction part in the national accredited journal. Hence, it is imperative to provide a deeper analysis of the structure of RA introduction in a nationally accredited journal. To fill the gap, this study focuses on analyzing the rhetorical structure of RA introduction in Sinta 1 indexed English language teaching journals. This study seeks to answer two research questions, namely (1) How are the RA introduction of Sinta 1 indexed ELT journals structured? and (2) What patterns are portrayed from the research article introduction published in those three journals?

Method

Since this research intends to investigate the organization of text structure, the researchers employed a qualitative study with discourse analysis. Qualitative method allows the researchers to interpret the construction of structure which deals with some text and unique steps in analyzing the data (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010; Creswell, 2009). Meanwhile, discourse analysis enables the researchers to study the linguistic structure beyond the sentence (Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2001). Accordingly, the Swales' (2004) CARS model consisting of move and step was implemented as the framework for analyzing the introduction section of RAs.

In this research, the corpus data comprised of 36 RAs collected from three national accredited ELT journals, namely The Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia Journal (TEFLIN), Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL), and Studies in English Language and Education (SiELE). The reasons for choosing those journals are that those three journals are, first, published by the English department in Indonesian university, second, nationally accredited in Sinta 1, and the last, open-source journals which can be freely accessed. To make the exact representation, the researcher randomly picked six RAs from each journal from 2019 to 2021, as those three years are the most recent. The corpus of this study was retrieved from each journal website.

To analyze the rhetorical structure of RA introduction, the researchers applied top-down analysis, which consists of these seven following steps: (a) communicative/functional categories, (b) segmentation, (c) classification, (d) linguistic analysis of each unit, (e) linguistic description, (f) text structure, and (g) discourse organizational tendencies in sequence (Biber et al., 2007). In analyzing the data, the lexical and syntactical signals proposed in the Swales CARS model were used to help the researcher identify each move and step (cf. Indrian & Ardi, 2019). The researcher provided the model of a general pattern in the introduction text structure across all texts in the table. The data validation was done by undertaking double-checking during the process of data analysis.

Results

In this study, several moves and steps of Swales' (2004) CARS model were found across three journals, namely TEFLIN journal, SiELE journal, and IJAL journal. Table 1 shows the frequency of each move and step.

Table 1. Move and step occurrences across three journals

Move		TEFLIN (n=6)		SiELE (n=6)		IJAL (n=6)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Move 1	M1S1	6	100%	6	100%	6	100%
Move 2	M2S1A	6	100%	6	100%	6	100%
	M2S1B	3	50%	1	17%	2	33%
	M2S2	0	0%	0	0%	1	17%
Move 3	M3S1	6	100%	5	83%	6	100%
	M3S2	4	67%	5	83%	5	83%
	M3S3	0	0%	0	0%	1	17%
	M3S4	5	83%	0	0%	1	17%
	M3S5	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	M3S6	3	50%	2	33%	0	0%
	M3S7	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

The findings showed that Move 1, Move 2, and Move 3 appeared in all samples across three journals. It was found that all writers occupied Move 1 Step 1 in writing their article. The same thing also happened in Move 2 Step 1A, where all writers from three journals implemented this move-in, arguing the space from previous research. Therefore, 100% TEFLIN and SiELE occupied M1S1 and M2S1A. On the contrary, there were only three writers (50%) in TEFLIN journal, one writer in SiELE journal (17%), and two writers in IJAL journal (33%) who occupied Move 2 Step 1B. For Move 2 Step 2, none of the writers in TEFLIN and SiELE journals used this move, only one writer in IJAL journal (17%) who used this move. In addition, Move 3 Step 1 appeared 100% in TEFLIN and IJAL journals

and 83% in SiELE journal. Move 3 Step 2 occurred 67% in TEFLIN journal and 83% in both SiELE and IJAL journals. Move 3 Step 3 was found only appeared in one sample of IJAL journal (17%). It was not found both in TEFLIN and SiELE journals. Concerning Move 3 Step 4, there were only one author in IJAL journal (17%) and five authors in TEFLIN journal (83%) who applied this move. Meanwhile, the occurrence appeared in Move 3 Step 6 with 50% in TEFLIN, 33% in SiELE, and 0% in IJAL. Lastly, the researcher discovered that all authors across three journals did not occupy Move 3 Step 5 and Move 3 Step 7.

Discussion

Structure of Research Article Introduction

From the findings above, it can be elaborated the nature of each move and step in each journal. As Swales (1990) argues, a move that exceeds 50% is considered obligatory, while the otherwise is considered optional. Then, it can be discussed as follows. In TEFLIN journal, it was found that seven rhetorical moves appeared in the samples; five of them are obligatory while the other two moves are optional. The compulsory moves include M1S1, M2S1A, M3S1, M3S2, and M3S4, while the optional moves consist of M2S1B and M3S6. One possible explanation for this is that the authors seem to realize Move 2 primarily by indicating a gap from the previous (M2S21A) and addressing the contribution of the research in the conclusion section.

Nevertheless, these findings seem to be in accordance with the format of Swales' CARS model in which, to realize Move 2, the author might occupy Move 2 Step 1A and or Move 2 Step 1B. The term 'or' here means either one. In addition, according to the CARS model, Move 3 Step 6 is included in PISF (probable in some fields), meaning that it might be appeared or not in a specific area of study.

Concerning SiELE journal, the obligatory and optional moves and steps are somewhat similar to TEFLIN journal. The difference was that M3S4 did not appear in SiELE. In addition, the authors in SiELE were less familiar with M2S1B and M3S6 as the occurrences were lower than the ones in TEFLIN. For IJAL journal, there were eight rhetorical moves identified from the samples, half of them comprising of M1S1, M2S1A, M3S1, and M3S2 were obligatory, and the other half, including M2S1B, M2S2, M3S3, and M3S4, were optional. These findings were in accordance with Swales' CARS model in that M2S1B, M2S2, M3S3, and M3S4 were labelled as optional.

The results of the deeper analysis also indicated that the occurrence of Move 1 Step 1 is rich with quotes from other studies. This was in line with the format of the Swales' CARS model that Move 1 must have a citation. Moreover, the absence of Move 3 Step 5 and Move 3 Step 7 across three journals was also in accordance with the guideline of Swales' model. According to Swales (2004), Step 5, Step 6, and Step 7 in Move 3 are probable in some fields (PISF). In conclusion, the RA introduction across three journals are well-structured following the Swales' (2004) CARS model with the absence of some moves in each journal: M2S2, M3S3, M3S5, and M3S7 in TEFLIN journal; M2S2, M3S3, M3S4, M3S5, and M3S7 in SiELE journal; M3S5, M3S6, and M3 in IJAL journal.

Move Pattern in Research Article Introduction

As shown in Table 2, it can be inferred that not all of the RA introduction occupied the same moves and steps as the Swales' CARS model. In TEFLIN journal, the starting point of the introduction section was started by generalizing the topic to increase specificity

(M1S1). Next, the second step was followed by indicating a gap (M2S1A). The third step was occupied by Move 3 Step 1, which appeared in all samples. Two authors settled M3S1 after M2S1A, and three implemented M3S1 after M2S1B. The occurrence of M2S1B appeared after M2S1A. One author applied to Move 1 Step 1 after occupying Move 2 Step 1A. Therefore, five authors followed the format of the Swales' CARS model while the other one did not.

In SiELE journal, the move and step began with Move 1 Step 1. The next step was followed by Move 2 Step 1A. It was then followed with Move 3 Step 1. However, Move 3 Step 1 was absent in one sample. In the third stage, there was an emergence of Move 1 Step 1 in two samples where one sample indicated the iteration of Move 1 and Move 2 but the other one did not. The cycling move here was in line with the Swales' CARS model. Hence, there was one sample that did not follow the CARS model in order.

In IJAL journal, the first step was occupied with Move 1 Step 1 followed with Move 2 Step 1A. The third stage was followed by Move 3 Step 1, which appeared in all samples. Two authors implement Move 3 Step 1 after reoccupying Move 1 Step 1 in the last part. Thus, two of six samples were not in accordance with Swales' CARS model.

Table 2. Move and step sequences across three journals

Text	Move-Step Sequences
TEFLIN 1	M1S1-M2S1A-M1S1-M3S1
TEFLIN 2	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
TEFLIN 3	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
TEFLIN 4	M1S1-M2S1A-M2S1B-M3S1
TEFLIN 5	M1S1-M2S1A-M2S1B-M3S1
TEFLIN 6	M1S1-M2S1A-M2S1B-M3S1
SiELE 1	M1S1-M2S1A
SiELE 2	M1S1-M2S1A-M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
SiELE 3	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
SiELE 4	M1S1-M2S1A-M1S1-M3S1
SiELE 5	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
SiELE 6	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
IJAL 1	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1-M1S1-M3S1
IJAL 2	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
IJAL 3	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1
IJAL 4	M1S1-M2S1A-M2S1B-M3S1
IJAL 5	M1S1-M2S1A-M2S1B-M2S2-M2S1A-M1S1-M3S1
IJAL 6	M1S1-M2S1A-M3S1

To conclude, in all 18 samples, the authors started the introductions by utilizing Move 1 Step 1 followed by Move 2 Step 1A. Move 3 Step 1 appeared in 17 samples. In other words, Move 3 Step 1 was absent in one sample. Since Move 2 Step 2, Move 3 Step 2, Move 3 Step 3, and Move 3 Step 4 are non-obligatory and present in specific contexts, the researchers did not identify them in the introductions. Accordingly, the researchers found that the authors employed Moves 1-3.

Conclusion

This study intended to answer the following research questions, namely (1) How are the structure of move and step found in the research article introduction of Sinta 1 indexed ELT journals? (2) What patterns are portrayed from the research article introduction published in those three journals?

To answer the formulated research questions, the researcher conducted a discourse analysis in the introduction sections of the research article published in three journals, namely TEFLIN, SiELE, and IJAL. First of all, the researcher retrieved the corpus data from each journal. Afterwards, the researcher read the introduction section of each research article to identify the structure of the whole text. Data analysis was done by implementing top-down analysis, which consists of seven steps. The Swales' CARS model (2004) was used as the framework for data analysis.

The results showed Moves 1-3 were used in the article introduction sections in the three journals. Although each journal had a different model, the format of the model followed the Swales' CARS model. For the move pattern, generally, all the research article introductions presented the moves and steps. Nevertheless, some authors need to pay attention more since some moves were disordered in the move and step sequences. These findings also proved that Swales' CARS model (2004) is applicable in English research articles (see Qamariah & Wahyuni, 2017).

Based on the findings, future authors who are non-native speakers of English are encouraged to apply Swales' CARS model to produce introduction sections when intending to publish their articles in Sinta-1-indexed journals. This three-move-model, together with the easy-to-follow steps, would be helpful to produce well-organized introductions. This study is limited to investigating the moves and step structures of the introduction sections. The researchers did not investigate the realization of each move and step. Hence, further studies on the topic need to be conducted.

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