Move Analysis of Senior High School Research Abstracts in a Philippine University

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Abstract

A well-written abstract speaks for the paper's quality—it reflects an article's value. Research is a relatively new discipline for senior high school learners, thus, the writing of an abstract can be problematic and challenging. Anchored on Hyland's model of research article abstracts as adapted by Behnam and Golpour (2014), this paper presents a move analysis of thirty (30) randomly-selected research abstracts of Grade 12 senior high school students in a Philippine University. The results revealed the three (3) dominant moves in the corpus of research abstracts namely Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product, Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusion, and Introduction-Product-Method. It was also noted that the "Conclusion" move is less frequently observed and considered "optional". Additionally, instances of move embedding were prominent between the Purpose and Method move. It was recommended that research instructors in the senior high school shall consider using models in teaching the writing of the abstract. The findings of this study may serve as a basis in crafting a genre-based research syllabus, with genre-based tasks.

1. INTRODUCTION

The text can be depicted as a sequence of 'moves.' A move is defined by Swales (2004) as a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative e function, either written or spoken. Moves which occur regularly in a text are considered obligatory; others which occur less frequently can be considered as optional.

Abstract is a fundamental component of an academic article. American National Standards Institute has defined abstract as "an abbreviated, accurate representation of the contents of a document, preferably prepared by its author(s) for publication with it" (Lorés, 2004, p. 281). Hyland (2009) emphasized that abstracts provides a basis for judgment whether the entire article merits further attention or not. Hence, the main purpose of the abstract is to aid other authors and researchers in surveying and selecting relevant literature. Through reading the abstract, one need not to spend time in reading the whole lengthy article in order to have an overview of the paper's content. Moreover, research conferences and research reviewers usually use the abstract as an indicator of a paper's "quality" and "relevance." In consonance, Lorés (2004) further averred that abstracts persuades the coordinators of seminars and conferences to admit or discard the submitted papers. In the academe, just by scrutinizing the abstract, the instructors can have an impression of the quality of the students' paper. Ultimately, abstract is a reflection of an academic article's value.

In the Philippine secondary schools, as part of the initiatives of the Department of Education to inculcate research culture among students, senior high school earners are tasked

to accomplish a full-blown research paper. Since research is a relatively new discipline for the learners, the writing of an abstract can be problematic and challenging as students are not yet adept to academic writing and research conventions. Hyland (2004) as cited in Can, Karabacak, and Qin (2016) asserts that a well-structured abstract involves all four structural units (introduction-methods-results-conclusions) in a linear order, which may not be the case for senior high school research papers.

Albeit the popularity and attention that research abstracts move analysis have received, scarce amount of empirical literature exist in the context of secondary schools. Most researches on the aforementioned topic focus on undergraduate, graduate, and professional field. Therefore, this paper aimed at scrutinizing research paper abstracts of Grade 12 senior high school students anchored on Hyland's model of research article abstracts as adapted by Behnam and Golpour (2014).

Research Questions

This paper aimed at answering the following questions:
1. What are the moves present in the senior high school research abstracts?
2. What are the obligatory and optional moves in the senior high school research abstracts?
3. What are the features presented in each moves in the senior high school research abstracts?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative Functions of Research Abstract

The abstract is the first paragraph in most research articles that shows a brief description of all the article's content. Notable experts in the field of linguistics agreed that the main communicative function of an abstract is to give an accurate summary of pertinent points or concepts, which represents or captures the essence of the whole article (Bhatia, 1993; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Santos, 1996; Martín-Martín, 2005; Walter, 2008; Lon et al., 2012). On the other hand, some scholars averred that abstracts may also serve a persuasive rather than a simple descriptive function. Abstracts need to motivate the reader to read on and take a look at the entire paper. (Lorés, 2004; Hyland, 2000). Thus, readers may use the abstract as a basis or indicator of a paper's quality. As a result, even excellent research papers may stay unnoticed and uncited if their abstracts are not well-written, informative, and convincing enough (Doro, 2013).

There are two main types of abstracts based on their communicative purpose, information content and structure. These are the indicative and informative or also known as descriptive abstract and informative abstract (Martín-Martín, 2005). The descriptive abstract presents a general overview of the contents and concepts discussed in an article. This type of abstracts do not provide adequate details about the true nature and specific contents of the papers, these abstracts usually remain vague, may not be convincing enough and may even cause loss of readership. More definite and unambiguous information is provided in informative abstracts, in which reference is made to the research context and methodology, main results and conclusions. Since more detail is provided, readers can better assess the paper in terms of its relevance, novelty and usefulness (Doró, 2013).

Structures of Research Abstract

Majority of the studies on move analysis of abstracts have focused on specific disciplines in the higher and graduate education, as well as in the professional field, but none focused on dealing with those written in the basic education. The abstracts of each research field have their own forms and structures, which must be strictly complied with. Although it has diverse structure, various scholars (Swales, 1990; Salager-Meyer, 1992; Bhatia, 1994; Santos, 1996; Phantama, 2000 as cited in Darabad, 2016; Hyland, 2000; Lorés, 2004; Promsin, 2006) underscored that a well-written abstract shall include at least four (4) moves

capturing the essential parts of a research article: Move 1: Introducing the purpose; Move 2: Describing the methodology; Move 3: Summarizing the results; Move 4: Presenting the conclusions. This four-move structure has also been referred to as the IMRD or IMRaD framework. Hartley (2004) (as cited in Doro, 2013) concludes that, although not all authors and editors prefer a more rigid format, structured abstracts are better than traditional ones as they force authors to systematically think over and present their research.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study carried out *Move Analysis* which is an approach to analyze the discourse structure of texts. The text is described as a sequence of 'moves', where each move represents a particular communicative function. The analysis begins with the development of an analytical framework, identifying and describing the move types that can occur in a genre. Subsequently, selected texts are segmented and analysed in each moves. The overall discourse structure of a text can be described in relation to the sequence of move types (Upton &Cohen, 2009).

Corpus of the Study

Thirty (30) research abstracts from the research papers of Grade 12 senior high school students in a Philippine university - school year 2019-200 were randomly selected. All selected abstracts were individually analyzed using the Coding Framework adapted from Hyland's Model of Research Article Abstracts as cited in Behnam and Golpour (2014). Table 1 presents descriptive statistics about the corpus size.

Table 1. Frequencies in the Corpus for Abstracts, Words, Sentences

Number of Abstracts	Number of Words	Number of Sentences
30	6253	314

Coding Framework

The study adapted Hyland's Model of Research Article Abstracts as cited in Behnam and Golpour (2014). Table 2 presents the model which is comprised of five (5) moves.

Table 2. Hyland's Model of Research Article Abstracts

Move	Function
Introduction (I)	Establishes context of the paper and motivates the research
Purpose (P)	Indicates purpose, outlines the aim behind the paper
Method (M)	Provides information on design, procedures, data analysis, etc.
Product (Pr)	Indicates results and the argument
Conclusion (C)	Points to applications or wider implications and Interpretation scope of paper

Ethical Considerations

The researcher maintained utmost confidentiality and anonymity of the research paper authors. The results do not necessarily reflect the overall quality of the research papers produced in the University.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Research Abstract Moves and its Frequency

Table 3. *Frequency of Moves Observed in Senior High School Research Abstracts*

Moves	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage	Abstract Number
I-P-M-Pr	**13**	43.33%	3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28 30
I-P-M-Pr-C	**8**	26.67%	5, 7, 11, 13, 16, 17, 27, 29
I-P-M	**3**	10.00%	1, 4, 21
I-M-P	1	3.33%	2
I-P	1	3.33%	12
P-M-Pr-C	1	3.33%	8
P-Pr	1	3.33%	15
I-M	1	3.33%	20
I-P-Pr	1	3.33%	24

It was observed that there were nine (9) moves present in the corpus of research abstracts. Three dominant moves were observed namely **Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product**, **Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusion**, and **Introduction-Product-Method**.The following excerpts from the three dominant moves were provided for reference:

Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product move:

*Advertising plays a significant role in the introduction of a new product in the market. It is regarded as one of the powerful art forms on Earth since it is essential element for the economic growth of the marketers and businesses. It is also renowned for its long lasting impact on the audience's mind. (**Introduction**) Thus, this study finds out the effectiveness of print media advertising in the marketability of Queso Doggilicious Twigbit in the City of Bacoor (**Purpose**). The research was undertaken among the students, Faculty members and staff of the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA - Molino Campus. The 367 participants of the study are selected using the convenience sampling method, where in the respondents are chosen because they happen to be in the right place at the right time. The study also used the descriptive research design and descriptive statistics in analyzing the data gathered from the respondents (**Method**). The results of the study highlighted that Queso Doggilicious Twigbit food business is marketable among the Generation Z population of the University, those who age 21 and below, which make them the target market of the business. It is also highlighted in the study the visual appeal and the content of the print media advertisement is the one that determine the effectiveness of print advertisement as it will hooked the attention of the audience and eventually boost the marketability of the business (**Product**).[#19]*

Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusion move:

*Political campaign becomes one of the important tools in every election. Candidate would always think of a campaign that can help them to win. Thus, creating an effective campaign is not easy, it requires a lot of time and effort (**Introduction**). This study aims to determine the different political campaigns and how it affects the voting preference of a voter (**Purpose**). The researchers utilized a survey questionnaire distributed to 202 respondents. Convenience sampling was used to select respondents (**Method**). The results show that political campaigns really affect the voting preference of the Filipinos, as this political campaign serves as communication between the candidate and the people. It leads the voters to choose the right candidate, it also helps them to know the platform of the running candidate (**Product**). At the end of the study it is recommended that a candidate should think of a campaign wherein it has*

*a clear information about themselves and their platforms, it should be organize and has good intention, and candidate should reach the people both on social media and those who cannot access it. It should be also creative and meaningful (**Conclusion**).*[#16]

Introduction-Purpose-Method move:

*In educating the young, the state will be assured of an adequate and competent workforce ready and fully equipped to face the challenges of global competition. The classroom climate which is often times set by the teacher is determined by the teacher's attitude. Attitude as a major determinant of a person's behavior influences the way a teacher relates with the students and thus affects students' academic performance. (Madukwe et al, 2019)(**Introduction**). This study uses a descriptive method for their quantitative research to analyze the teachers from City of Bacoor National High School – Georgetown Annex favorability about the said policy, to distinguish the awareness of the teacher to the said policy and to analyze the effect of NCLB to the teachers' attitude toward their students (**Purpose**). The instrument used to collect the information and data for the research is survey questionnaire. It consists of questions that are simple and can easily be understood by the respondents. The researchers made questions that will gain their interest and be much more obliged to answer the questions asked. The data analysis procedure used by the researchers is Descriptive Analysis. It is used to describe the basic features of the collected data and information from the conducted survey. It also provides simple summaries to easily spot the mean, median and mode (**Method**).* [#4]

Interestingly, instances of *move embedding* were also observed in some of the abstracts. It was raised by Halleck & Connor (2006) that researchers combine moves, so that one move can be embedded within another or two moves may occur in one sentence, which is called ″blended″ moves. This move is used to for a more concise expression of thoughts so as to lessen the number of words—a well written abstract shall be limited to 150-250 words. Further discussion were given in the later part of this research.

2. Obligatory and Optional Moves

Table 4. Obligatory and Optional Moves in the Senior High School Research Abstract

Move	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage	Classification
Introduction	28	93.3%	Obligatory
Purpose	29	96.7%	Obligatory
Method	26	86.7%	Obligatory
Product	24	80%	Obligatory
Conclusion	9	30%	Optional

It can be noted that only 9 out of 30 or 30% of the abstracts contain the "Conclusion" move, which makes it an "optional" move for the corpus. This is in consonance with the findings of Bonifacio (2019) where "Conclusion" move was found optional. However, it should be accounted that "Conclusion" move is one of the most essential feature of a research so as of an abstract—the conclusion aids the readers in understanding why the research matters to them after they have read the paper.

3. Features of Research Abstracts Moves

3.1. Introduction

Upon analysis, there were three (3) dominant styles of how the introduction move was presented. These are: *outlining the problem, discussing the importance*, *and giving definitions.*

3.1.1. Outlining the problem.

The problem that motivated the authors in pursuing the study is being presented or discussed. Notice how this part was always succeeded by the *Purpose move*, which makes the transition more coherent, as the purpose is anchored on the problem given.

*Food preference is a concept of "what is good to eat". Numerous studies have found that students during their adolescence period have an unhealthy eating pattern as they were exposed to eating processed foods and eating at fast food chains. This is due to several factors like price, time, or peer influence(**Introduction**).This study aims to identify food preferences and possible factors that affect the food preferences of senior high school students...(**Purpose**)* [#7]

*Television viewing remains a popular pastime among Filipinos, including teenagers. The content contained in television programs can be contradictory to the social morality that a Filipino teenager should uphold. Continually watching content that is in direct opposition to enhancing their social morality can affect their view of reality (**Introduction**). This study applies George Gerbner's cultivation theory to the television medium, to see if restricted content consumption homogenizes teenager's social morality (**Purpose**).* [#14]

*Parental absence has become a proliferating problem in the society today. It affects the children in many aspects, such as academic and career decision making (**Introduction**). This study aims to determine the impact of parental absence to the attitude of Senior High School students (**Purpose**).* [#30]

Move embedding was also apparent in this instance (Introduction – Purpose):

*Election is the means by which citizens choose their representatives who would shape and make policies and decisions governing the people. Today, election is always associated with fraud and violence. The act of choosing leaders which is supposed to be a right and duty of the citizens are often times mishandled (**Introduction**) that is why this study aims to determine the political leadership style preferences of the HUMSS students that would definitely give people and idea on who they think are deserving and right to be in a certain position (**Purpose**).* [#10]

3.1.2. Discussing the importance.

This gives the relevance of the topic being pursued. The following are some excerpts:

Social media is everywhere in today's generation. It affects people in different aspects of life, such as express and influence. [#11]

Customer perception can motivate and help small business owners to come up the idea of having a stall business. It helps the business to improve the quality and them to be satisfied as they have this as a first business with a small amount of capital that many can afford to provide the necessities of the target costumer. [#1]

Advertising plays a significant role in the introduction of a new product in the market. It is regarded as one of the powerful art form on Earth since it is

essential element for the economic growth of the marketers and businesses. [#19]

3.1.3. Giving definitions.

Meaning or characterization is being given on the topic of the research. Some examples can be seen below:

Street vendor is a person who offers goods or services for sale to the public without having a permanently built structure but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall. Street vendors could be stationary and occupy space on the pavements or other public/private areas, and move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts, cycles, baskets on their heads, or in moving buses. They are often seen on sidewalk, beside schools, on Foot Bridge, and streets where a lot of people pass by. [#17]

Herbal medicine is the use of plants or plant extracts for medicinal purposes. It is the most affordable and much accessible type of medicine all around the world and people believe that herbal medicines are more convenient than pharmaceutical drugs. Herbals does not go through the laborious testing and experimentation; thus, herbal medicine practitioners have organismic and subjective knowledge. [#24]

It is also worth noting that the Introduction move was dominantly expressed in simple present tense. According to the University of Melbourne (n.d.) Introduction must include background information which are generally accepted as fact in a discipline. Therefore, it is usually presented in the present tense, which indicates to the reader that the author believes that the research findings are still true and relevant, even though the original research may have been conducted some time ago.

3.2. Purpose.

The aims or objectives of the study were presented explicitly in the present tense. Only the main or general objective of the studies were stated. The following are the statements that were used to introduce the Purpose move:

The main objective of this study is…

This study aims to identify…

This study explores…

This study finds out…

3.3. Method.

The methods expressed in the abstracts were also outlined using varied patterns which contains the important elements of a research methodology such as the *research design, respondents or sample size, sampling procedure, data gathering procedure, research instrument,* and *data analysis procedure*. However, some abstracts lack complete elements. The following were the common patterns found in the corpus:

Research Design-Data Gathering Procedure-Respondents-Setting

*Thus, this Descriptive-Quantitative (**Research Design**) study presents a comparative analysis of how these two generations choose their romantic partners. The researchers created and administered a 4-point scale questionnaire (**Data Gathering Procedure**) to one hundred thirty-three randomly-selected (133) students and employees (**Respondents**) of a private university in Bacoor City (**Setting**), sixty-seven (67) coming from generation z and sixty-six (66) coming from generation x.* [#5]

Research Design-Respondents-Data Gathering Procedure-Data Analysis

*This study used descriptive research design (**Research Design**), with 100 random grade 11 & 12 both male and female Senior High school students as a respondents (**Respondents**). The data gathering was conducted through the use of survey questionnaire, Slovin`s formula was used to calculate the sample size (**Data Gathering Procedure**). Those data were analyzed through descriptive data analysis (**Data Analysis**).* [#6]

Research Design-Data Gathering Procedure/Instrument-Data Analysis-Respondents

*Descriptive design (**Research Design**) was used and survey type of questionnaire was used for the data gathering (**Data Gathering Procedure/Instrument**). Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics (**Data Analysis**). The respondents were 184 senior high school students from 4 different strands namely; Accountancy and Business Management (ABM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), General Academic Strand (GAS) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) (**Respondents**).* [#9]

Respondents-Setting-Sampling Procedure-Research Design-Data Analysis

*The research was undertaken among the students, Faculty member and staff (**Respondents**) of the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA - Molino Campus (**Setting**). The 367 participants of the study are selected using the convenience sampling method, where in the respondents are chosen because they happen to be in the right place at the right time (**Sampling Procedure**). The study also used the descriptive research design and descriptive statistics in analyzing the data gathered from the respondents (**Data Analysis**).* [#19]

Instances of move embedding were also apparent between the Purpose and Method move. These instances were present in sentence and phrase level. This makes the flow of ideas more concise and coherent, as the method of the research is contingent to its purpose. Excerpts were provided for reference:

*This study used a descriptive method for the quantitative research (**Method**) to analyze the teachers from City of Bacoor National High School – Georgetown Annex favorability about the said policy, to distinguish the awareness of the teacher to the said policy and to analyze the effect of NCLB to the teachers' attitude toward their students (**Purpose**).*[#4]

*Thus, this Descriptive-Quantitative study (**Method**) presents a comparative analysis of how these two generations choose their romantic partners (**Purpose**).* [#5]

*Descriptive research design was used and questionnaires were administered (**Method**) to determine the perceptions of 351 Grade 11-12 random Senior High School Students from University of Perpetual Help- Molino (**Purpose**).* [#17]

The elements of the methodology were mostly expressed in the past tense which indicates that the steps or procedures were already done.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the study, there were three (3) dominant moves observed in the corpus of research abstracts namely *Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product, Introduction-*

Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusion, and *Introduction-Product-Method*. Additionally, it can be noted that most of the abstracts lack some of the important parts such as the "Product" and "Conclusion" part. The "Conclusion" move was considered "optional" since only 9 out of 30 or 30% of the abstracts contain the specific move. Additionally, those research abstracts (21 out of 30 or 70%) which follow the first two dominant moves can be considered as "well-written" since they contain the most important elements of an abstract such as Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusion. It can be averred that if an abstract lack several components, then it cannot "accurately" capture or represent the contents of a study.

Move embedding were also observed in some of the research abstracts. These instances occurred between Introduction and Method move, and Purpose and Method move. These findings were parallel in the study of Darabad (2016) which showed that the *method move* was embedded in the *purpose move* which shape the mixed Purpose-Method move. This mixing process was also in line with the findings of Santos (1996) and Pho (2008).

Three (3) dominant styles of how the Introduction move was presented were found. These are *outlining the problem, discussing the importance*, *and giving definitions.* It was commonly written in simple present tense.

The Methods move in the abstracts were also presented using varied patterns such as *Research Design-Data Gathering Procedure-Respondents-Setting, Research Design-Respondents-Data Gathering Procedure-Data Analysis, Research Design-Data Gathering Procedure/Instrument-Data Analysis-Respondents,* and *Respondents-Setting-Sampling Procedure-Research Design-Data Analysis.* It was mainly written in simple past tense.

Considering the results yielded, the researcher recommends that research instructors in the senior high school shall consider using models in teaching the writing of the abstract. This is to make the students familiar with the structure and vital components of a well-written abstract. Through this, learners will be able to produce a more coherent abstracts. Likewise, the findings of this study may be used by teachers and curriculum planners in crafting a genre-based research syllabus, with genre-based tasks.

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