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RHETORICAL MOVES VARIATIONS OF RESEARCH ARTICLE DISCUSSION SECTIONS PUBLISHED IN REPUTABLE JOURNALS

by

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Abstract:

Publishing academic articles is no longer an option but an obligation among academics. Nevertheless, in reality, many students have difficulty writing research results in the form of articles. The current research aims to describe the arrangement of the discussion sections in research articles published in reputable journals and the difference between the research article discussion section in journals indexed with SINTA 1 and SINTA 2. A qualitative study content analysis is used in this research. The data in this study were analyzed using Yang & Allison's (2003) Models. Twenty discussions were taken as the primary data. At first, twenty research articles were selected from SINTA, ten discussions from S1, and the other ten articles were from S2. The articles selected here are those which were published in 2021. The research findings show that there are three moves that the authors always include, namely Move 2 (reporting results), Move 4 Step a (interpreting results), and Move 4 Step b (comparing results with literature). The findings also imply that the authors have used most of the moves and steps proposed by Yang & Allison's (2003) framework in compiling the discussion section. This research can benefit researchers, especially university students who want to submit their manuscripts to journals. By knowing what the editors want in writing the discussion section, mistakes can be minimized since the most revision is on this part.

Keywords: rhetorical moves; research article; discussion section; reputable journal.

INTRODUCTION

Few studies reported on rhetorical moves in the research article discussion, and most report otherwise. Many scholars suggested models for the move sequence in previous research articles related to moving analysis in discussion sections. Scholars studied how rhetorical gestures present themselves in the finding and discussion sections of papers written by EFL undergraduate students in Indonesia (Suherdi, D., Kurniawan, E., & Lubis, 2020). The findings revealed that the four movements, establishing background information, reporting results, summarizing results, and commenting on outcomes, were expressed in most students' finding and discussion sections at the move level.

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However, several findings and discussion sections at the step level lacked extensive information on the order in which the results were presented. The analysis technique used to generate the findings, the explanation for the findings, and the relevance of the findings. Randomized rhetorical patterns dominated as well. These problems contradicted with the demand that publishing academic articles is no longer an option but an obligation among academics. Nevertheless, in reality, many students have difficulty writing research results in the form of articles (Turmudi, 2020; Turmudi et al., 2020).

Another scholar studied rhetorical moves (Nodoushan, 2021). He observed if there were any differences in the move structures of master's thesis discussion subgenres written by Iranian EFL graduate students compared to their non-Iranian peers. On the one hand, and journal paper writers on the other. It also intended to determine if Iranian EFL graduate students believe some movements to be necessary, customary, or elective. Furthermore, (Lubis, 2020) investigated the argumentation structure of non-native English speaker novice writers' results and discussion sections in research articles: a case study of Indonesian undergraduate students. Given the growing presence of non-native English speaker authors in international publications, academic scholars of English continue to pay close attention to the rhetorical arrangement of their research articles. Using a move analysis technique, this study analyzed the rhetorical arrangement of academic argumentation in the iterative findings and discussion sections of 113 Indonesian English education undergraduate students.

Although all the studies above (Lubis, 2020; Nodoushan:2021; Suherdi, D., Kurniawan, E., & Lubis, 2020) reported research about the rhetorical moves in the discussion section but none of them investigated the rhetorical moves of the research article discussion section that have been published in journals accredited by SINTA. Referring to the research gap from previous studies, the researcher wishes to conduct research entitled rhetorical moves variations of research article discussion section published in some reputable journals.

In this study, the researcher compared the discussion sections in reputable journals based on their level. The rank or level of the journal to be studied is categorized according to the ranking in Science and Technology Index (SINTA). SINTA is chosen in this research since it is one of the national journal indexers in Indonesia that provides an assessment for a journal. SINTA assesses the performance of journals by indexing all national publications that the

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National Journal Accreditation has approved based on accreditation and citation requirements (Salmaa, 2022). SINTA makes a journal quality clustering in assessing a journal with the term 'SINTA' followed by the rank number. There are six categories, namely SINTA 1 (S1), SINTA 2 (S2), SINTA 3 (S3), SINTA 4 (S4), SINTA 5 (S5), and SINTA 6 (S6). The clustering is sorted from highest to lowest. S1 is the highest journal level, and S6 is the lowest. However, the level of journals that will be used in this study are journals that have S1 and S2 ratings. This time, the scope of articles used as research samples is articles related to English education research.

In a research paper, the finding and discussion part are very significant. This section is not only to report the study's findings but also to build arguments that might persuade the reader of the relevance of the results by emphasizing the connections and differences with past research (Amnuai, 2017; Basturkmen, 2009; Lim, 2010). There are four primary rhetorical moves in the finding and discussion section: (1) establishing background information, (2) delivering findings, (3) summarizing results, and (4) commenting on outcomes. The finding and discussion section's standard norms entail particular abilities, such as the ability to effectively convey results and remark on or argue against them critically.

This research has two kinds of significance, theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research's findings can be an academic contribution to be used by future researchers interested in rhetorical patterns in writing, especially in research articles. Practically, the researcher hopes that this research will give some benefits and contribution to university students who want to submit their manuscripts to an accredited journal to know how a good discussion section is composed in a journal so that their manuscript will be readily accepted and get not too much revision from the editor.

For academics and researchers interested in broadening their knowledge across subjects, research article has long been regarded as a significant academic genre because they are the results of rigorous, methodical, and impartial investigation. Research papers are precious (Tessuto, 2015). With the expanding number of academic seminars, workshops, debates, and publications, the ability to create an appropriate research paper has become more critical than ever. The quality of research papers reflects the writer's ability to write relevant research articles. In general, high-quality research publications should have three elements: innovation,

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accurate research techniques, and the applicability of the findings (Setiawati, D., Nabilla, S. N., Suherdi, D., Kurniawan, E., Gunawan, W., & Lubis, 2021).

To uncover originality in a field of study, researchers should do a comprehensive literature search to determine what is known and what gaps need to be filled. Some areas may have been studied, but the reports are still conflicting. The uniqueness of the research will be primarily determined by the researcher's in-depth understanding of the area. Many high-impact journals are increasingly looking for unique material to publish as research outputs grow.

Since Swales' (Swales, J.M. & Feak, 1990) study of communicative gestures in research papers, the structure of academic writing is receiving increasing attention. It has frequently been prompted by pedagogical considerations, a factor becoming increasingly significant as the number of research authors grows. As a result of this expansion, students now need to be taught discipline-specific components of research writing. The rules of research writing, particularly the communicative gestures that authors must undertake to build their primary ideas and arguments, are among these features.

The 'discussion' sub-genre is one field of writing that could benefit from genre or move-based study. Students, for example, frequently claim that writing the discussion part of their thesis is tough. Several foreign or second-language writing experts have noted this (Swales, J. M., & Feak, 1994; Wilkinson, 1991). "The trouble is that Discussions differ greatly depending on many criteria"(Swales, J. M., & Feak, 1994). They noticed that one aspect affecting this heterogeneity is the variety of research problems that various researchers try to figure out what is going on. Whereas some research problems need a thorough explanation of a specific event, others may focus on identifying answers to a problem (Swales, J. M., & Feak, 1994).

Yang and Allison (Yang, R., & Allison, 2003) developed a move-structure model in an attempt to give a unifying framework for discussion writers based on which they may adjust their talks to the communicative function they are generally supposed to fulfill (Yang, R., & Allison, 2003). This move framework was based on their earlier study, which looked at applied linguistics research publications. This framework lists seven rhetorical strategies used by writers in their debates. According to scholars (Swales, J. M., & Feak, 2004), discussion sections should condense research space, acknowledge constraints, and give implications for future study. Because of its conciseness and multi-layered architecture, Yang & Allison's model was

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popular among later studies (Amnuai, W., & Wannaruk, 2012; Basturkmen, 2009; Liu, Y., & Buckingham, 2018; Nodoushan, M., & Khakbaz, 2011; Zekrati, 2015).

Interpreting findings, comparing results to literature, accounting for outcomes, and assessing results are the four sub-steps that make up the direct action of "commenting on results." A scholar (Basturkmen, 2009) introduced three adjustments to Yang & Allison's updated framework: first, the first two movements, background information, and summary of findings, were nonobligatory; second, the sub-step accounting for results was omitted since it overlapped with understanding outcomes. The third alteration was to provide more explanatory steps: 1) Alternative explanations, 2) Literature references to support explanations, and 3) Evaluations of the reasons presented are also included. Basturkmen's redesigned framework's merit was that it identified the result–comment sequence as a cycle and multi-level character. For the current investigation, Basturkmen's framework was used for the reasons stated above because it gives a short explanation of movements at extra step levels instead of the move level in the result-comment sequence, allowing for more apparent differences between frequent and noted moves (Liu, Y., & Buckingham, 2018). As a result, distinguishing the degrees of quality of discussion sections is ideal for the aim of this study.

By using Yang and Allison's framework, this study aims to answer the questions as follows:

1. How do the authors arrange the discussion sections in research articles published in reputable journals?
2. How is the arrangement of rhetorical patterns in the discussion section different in both journal ratings?

METHOD

Design

This research employed a qualitative approach, while the research design used content analysis since this study focuses on textual data. The data in this study were analyzed using discussion moves analysis by Yang & Allison (2003). The similarities and differences of rhetorical moves can be captured through move analysis, as exhibited in the discussion part of

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research articles from accredited publications.

Subject

Twenty discussions were taken as the primary data. At first, twenty research articles are selected from SINTA. Then, a further selection process yielded only ten discussions from S1 and the other ten articles from S2. The articles selected here are those which were published in 2021. SINTA is the most common and popular abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature among researchers in Indonesia.

Data Collecting Technique

First, the researcher accessed the SINTA database to search for the research articles. Second, ten articles from each S1 and S2 level were taken as the data. All selected articles were downloaded and saved in a folder to make the analysis more manageable. Fourth, the researcher read and analyzed the discussion sections deeply.

Data Analysis Technique

The gathered data was then examined using the following procedures. After obtaining the data, the researcher classified the articles according to their levels. Yang and Allison's (Yang, R., & Allison, 2003) models were used to assess twenty publications. The researcher then read each article's discussion section several times to get the information and general significance of the data. Some phrases used in articles that motioned each rhetorical move were highlighted in various colors based on each move when reviewing the data. The rhetorical moves from each discussion section were then compared to the theory to determine how it was arranged. Consequently, the data was dissected into results in a descriptive manner.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The description of this section is arranged based on the research question asking about the arrangement of rhetorical moves used in research articles published in reputable journals (SINTA 1 and SINTA 2). It also focuses on the moves and steps, summarizing general results and observations. The following table represents the rhetorical moves in each discussion

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section. The table consists of three columns. The first column is the moves and steps, while the second and the third column are the structure of rhetorical moves distribution of the discussion section in SINTA 1 and SINTA 2.

Table 1 The Distribution of Rhetorical Moves of Discussion Section

Moves	Steps	SINTA 1	SINTA 2	Total
M1	Background information	6	6	12
M2	Reporting results	10	10	20
M3	Summarizing results	6	5	11
M4	Commenting on results			
	Step a Interpreting results	10	10	20
	Step b Comparing results with the literature	10	10	20
	Step c Accounting for results	2	1	2
	Step d Evaluating results	-	1	1
M5	Summarizing the study	1	1	2
M6	Evaluating the study			
	Step a Indicating information	-	1	1
	Step b Indicating significance/advantage	2	-	2
	Step c Evaluating methodology	-	-	-
M7	Deduction from the research			
	Step a Making suggestions	-	-	-
	Step b Recommending further research	-	1	-
	Step c Drawing pedagogic implications	-	-	-

Note: Adopted from Yang & Allison's (2003) model

As displayed in Table 1, all rhetorical moves were employed in the discussion sections except Move 6 Step c (evaluating methodology), Move 7 Step a (making suggestions), and Step c (drawing pedagogic implications). Meanwhile, Move 2 (reporting results), Move 4 Step a (interpreting results), and Move 4 Step b (comparing results with literature) appeared in each research article. Therefore, the research articles indicated that those three moves were obligatory. The next move that appeared the most was Move 1 (background information), which appeared in thirteen articles, followed by Move 3 (summarizing results), which appeared in eleven articles.

The result also showed interesting variations in which Move 4 Step d (evaluating results), Move 6 Step a (indicating information), and Move 7 Step b (recommending further research) only appeared in research articles published in S2 journals. Meanwhile, Move 7 Step b (indicating significance/ advantage) only appear in the research article published in the S1

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journal. The meaning and implementation of each recognized move are described in the following paragraphs.

Move 1: Background Information

This move is intended to enlighten the reader by providing information on necessary items such as the study's goal, theoretical background, and methodology. There were seven Move 1 in SINTA 1 research article discussion, and six Move 1 were found in SINTA 2 research article discussion. The writers in both research article discussions, especially in SINTA 1, tend to open the discussion section by presenting background information.

Move 2: Reporting Results

This move is used to convey the research finding. The finding is usually offered by supporting evidence such as examples and statistical results. All of the articles' writers in SINTA 1 and SINTA 2 discussions have included this move in the discussion section. Additionally, reporting results are classified as required moves with a 100% frequency of occurrence. It was indicated that reporting results should not be skipped because it is essential for the discussion section.

Move 3: Summarizing Result

The Yang & Allison (2003) model states that summarizing the results is the next move. This move combines and typically shows some integrated findings. In other words, this move is a compilation of several findings from a specific study. According to the current study, this move does not appear very often, only three times in all research article discussions. Additionally, both in S1 and S2 study paper discussions, Move 3 is optional. It suggested that the discussion section is unaffected exceptionally by Move 3's absence.

Move 4: Commenting on the Result

In this move, the authors can give comments and determine the meaning of the study found. This process consists of four steps: 1) interpreting the data, 2) comparing the results to the literature, 3) accounting for the results, and 4) evaluating the results. Move 4 was obligatory in SINTA 1 and SINTA 2, significantly in Step a and Step b. In terms of steps, Step c and Step d were considered optional since these steps do not appear much in both research article discussions. Move five only appears in one discussion section in SINTA 2.

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Move 5: Summarizing the Result

This move provides a brief review of the overall research findings. Writers utilize several expressions that imply a conclusion while executing this move. Both in the research article discussion for SINTA 1 and SINTA 2, there are a few Move 5s. Additionally, Move 5 was viewed as optional due to its low frequency of occurrence. This indicates that the writer's use of this technique in the discussion had no discernible impact.

Move 6: Evaluating the Study

Yang & Allison's (2003) paradigm states that evaluating the study comes next. The writer can do the following three tasks while evaluating the study: 1) indicating limitations, 2) indicating significance/advantage, and 3) evaluating methodology. This method is used to assess the study's significance in one area and its limitations in other areas so that readers are alerted. They do not generalize the findings as they like. The research finding shows that Move 6 Step a only appears in an article in SINTA 2, while Move 6 Step b only appears in SINTA 1 articles.

Move 7: Deduction from the Research

Making deductions from the study is the final strategy Yang & Allison (2003) mentioned in the research article discussion. This move went beyond the findings by offering solutions to the problems found (Step a), emphasizing the direction of more study (Step b), or detailing pedagogic implications (Step c). The data analysis shows only Move 7 step b, which appears in an article in SINTA 2.

Discussion

The arrangement of research articles discussion sections in reputable journals

This study aimed to discover the rhetorical patterns used by the authors of research articles published in journals indexed S1 and S2. The first research question raised in this study relates to the rhetorical patterns they use in writing the discussion section. The answer to this question refers to the moves and steps used by the authors in compiling the discussion section. Based on data analysis using Yang & Allison's (2003) framework, most of the moves were found in the discussion sections written by researchers in both journals. There are only a small

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number of moves that the researchers do not list. Even that are moves only found in journals indexed S1 and not in journals indexed S2, and vice versa.

From all the moves and steps in Yang & Allison's (2003) framework, three moves always appear in all analyzed articles. These three moves are Move 2 (reporting results), Move 4 Step a (interpreting results), and Move 4 Step b (comparing results with literature). Meanwhile, Move 2 (reporting results) is the move that dominates and always appears in all articles in both journals. This study's results were consistent with research conducted by (Warsito, Syah, S. A., & Harahap, 2017), where master's students in Indonesia consider this move a crucial move to appear in the discussion section. In addition, master's students in Iran (Nodoushan, M., & Khakbaz, 2011) and Malaysia (Dastjerdi, Z. S., Tan, H., & Abdullah, 2017) also brought up this move in their discussion section.

The previous study (Arabi, n.d.) aims to compare the writing of the discussion section in two languages, namely Arabic and English. As a result, Move 2 in the writing of the discussion section always appears in articles written in Arabic, while in English articles, Move two tends to be quasi-obligatory. This is because this move does not always appear in every article, but researchers mention its existence quite often. The same results are also shown by (Mat Hussin, N. I. S., & Nimehchisalem, 2018). They stated that "reporting results" and "commenting on results" were researchers' most frequently used moves in writing discussion sections. This shows that the emergence of Move 2 (reporting results) is essential. It is because the discussions written by the researchers are always related to the research results they have done.

Furthermore, the moves that always appear in articles in both journals indexed S1 and S2 are Move 4 Step a (commenting on results) and Move 4 Step b (comparing results with literature). This indirectly indicates that the two steps in this move are a must considering the purpose of the discussion section in a study is to elaborate on the findings, the theory used, and some previous studies related to the research topic. The findings in this study are in line with the opinion of (Basturkmen, 2009), which states that Move 4 is the core movement in the discussion section. Although the authors have never been absent in presenting Move 4 Step a and Move 4 Step b, the authors include very little use of the emergence of Move 4 Step c (Accounting for results) and Move 4 Step d (Evaluating results).

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Move 1 (background information) and Move 3 (summarizing results) are the next moves often appearing in the discussion section. Move 1 usually occurs in the first paragraph of the discussion section. This shows that the authors start the discussion by presenting background information from their research by reviewing the research objectives, research questions, research methods, and even related theories. This finding supports the previous study (Arabi, n.d.), which found that Move 1 in the discussion section was obligatory in English articles.

As for Move 3, summarizing results, quite a lot appears in the pattern of writing the discussion section. The difference between move two and Move 3 is that Move 2 explains the findings in more detail than Move 3, whereas Move 3 only represents a large portion of each sub-section or sums up the result. According to (Swales, J. M., & Feak, 1994), the existence of Move 3 is usually indicated by using verbs that indicate conclusions such as overall, in general, on the whole, so forth.

The difference in discussion section rhetorical patterns in SINTA 1 and SINTA 2 journal rating

From all discussion sections analyzed using Yang & Allison's (2003) framework, one move is only found in journal articles indexed S1, namely, Move 6 Step B (indicating significance). Meanwhile, the moves in the journal articles indexed by S2 are Move 4 Step d (evaluating results) and Move 6 Step an (indicating limitation). Finally, the Moves that are not found in the journal article at all are Move 6 Step c (evaluating methodology), Move 7 Step a (making suggestions), and Move 7 Step c (drawing pedagogic implication).

As for the closing statements usually used by researchers based on the analyzed discussion, the authors end their discussion section by "commenting on the results." Some of the authors conclude by concluding the current research. This finding is inversely proportional to the statement (Holmes, 1997) that sociology discussion is closed by giving a recommendation. On the other hand, Arabi's (2020) research states that Move 6 and 7 are absent in the Arabic discussion section. This difference is caused because the authors of the Arabic discussion section of Move 6 Step a (stating limitation) are included in the introduction section, which has its subtitle entitled "research boundaries." For move 7, the authors usually write it in a separate sub-chapter entitled "suggestion and recommendation," which is positioned at the end of the discussion section.

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CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Through an in-depth analysis of twenty scientific articles published in reputable journals, the researcher found that the majority of moves and steps proposed by Yang & Allison's (2003) framework have been used by the authors in compiling the discussion section. The authors, whether in S1 or S2, always include Move 2 (reporting results), Move 4 Step a (interpreting results), and Move 4 Step b (comparing results with literature).

Regarding the difference between the discussion section in S1 and S2, one move is only found in journal articles indexed S1, namely, Move 6 Step B (indicating significance). Meanwhile, the moves in the journal articles indexed by S2 are Move 4 Step d (evaluating results) and Move 6 Step an (indicating limitation). The Moves that are not found in the journal article at all are Move 6 Step c (evaluating methodology), Move 7 Step a (making suggestions), and Move 7 Step c (drawing pedagogic implication).

Move one is often found in the discussion section at the beginning of the first paragraph. The authors begin their writing by revealing the research objectives, questions, theory, and methodology. As for the closing statements, the authors tend to end their discussion section by commenting on the results. Move six and Move seven are rarely found at the end of the discussion section since the authors usually write them in a separate sub-chapter entitled "conclusion," "suggestion," or "implication."

Implication

By raising research topics related to rhetorical moves in the discussion section, the researcher hopes this research can benefit researchers, especially university students who want to submit their manuscripts to journals. Knowing what the editors want in writing the discussion section can minimize mistakes since most of the revision is on this part.

Besides, the recommendation is addressed to future researchers dealing with rhetorical moves analysis. The research has limited data and only focuses on analyzing the discussion section in research articles. Hence, it is still open to conducting similar research in other areas.

BIO-PROFILE

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