



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**GENRE ANALYSIS ON CONCLUDING SECTION OF MALAYSIAN APPLIED
LINGUISTICS RESEARCH ARTICLES**

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**GENRE ANALYSIS ON CONCLUDING SECTION OF MALAYSIAN APPLIED
LINGUISTICS RESEARCH ARTICLES**

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Bachelor of Education with Honours
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The project entitled '**Genre Analysis on Concluding Section of Malaysian Applied Linguistics Research Articles**' was prepared by Tang Ping Wei and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Education with Honours (Teaching English as Second Language).

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ABSTRACT

GENRE ANALYSIS ON CONCLUDING SECTION OF MALAYSIAN APPLIED LINGUISTICS RESEARCH ARTICLES

Tang Ping Wei

This case study examined the structure and linguistics features of the concluding section of Malaysian Applied Linguistics research articles (RA). Based on the stratified random sampling, 50 RAs were obtained from the 8 journals. The move structures employed in these concluding sections were analysed by using the checklist adopted from Yang and Allison (2003). Meanwhile, the language features were analysed based on the checklist adapted from Allsop (1983), Bunton (2005), Huddleston and Pullum (2005), Swales (1981), Swales (1990), and Swales and Feak (2004). The results showed that 35 RAs had the heading of Conclusion, three with the heading of Discussions, two with Summary and the rest with different headings. There were 23 RAs containing all three obligatory moves including Summarize the study (M1), Evaluating the study (M2), and Deductions from the research (M3), 18 with M1 and M3, five RAs with M1 and M2, and the rest RA do not have all obligatory moves. There were 15 RAs with the move pattern of Summarize the study (M1) followed by Drawing pedagogical implication, (M1^M3S2). Besides, 14 RAs had the recycling moves and was dominated by recycling of Summarize the study (M1) which followed by Indicating significance (M2S1) with eight occurrences, [M1^M2S1]⁸. For the language features, 49 out of 50 RAs used modal verbs as hedging device. Moreover, the research also found that Malaysians writers had various choices for language features included the main verbs used to summarize the study, to indicate the limitations, and to recommend further research as well as the lexical phrases used to offer pedagogical implications. Among 49 RAs, 22 types of main verbs were found. The dominant main verbs used to summarize the study were *show* and *reveal*. However, only three types of main verbs were indentified to indicate the limitations of the study. The main verbs of *limited*, *insufficient*, and *questioned* were used as the indicators of limitation in the study. In order to recommend further research, nine main verbs were found to play the role of / informed the recommendations. The most common main verbs used to recommend further research was *investigate*. There were 26 examples were found to offer the pedagogical implications of the study. The common lexical phrases used to offer pedagogical implications were *could provide*, *as guide*, *shed/ throw some light*, and *offers some important insights into*. The results revealed more than half Malaysian RAs did not follow the move order as suggested by Yang and Allison (2003).

ABSTRAK

ANALYSIS GENRE BAGI SEKSYEN PENUTUP ARTIKEL KAJIAN LINGUISTIK GUNAAN DI MALAYSIA

Tang Ping Wei

Kajian kes ini telah meniasat cara penulisan artikel kajian di kalangan penulis Malaysia khususnya artikel Linguistik Gunaan. Berdasarkan persampelan rawak stratifikasi, 50 artikel telah dipilih daripada 8 jurnal. Penyiasatan langkah di dalam seksyen penutup dijalankan berdasarkan senarai yang dikemukakan oleh Yang dan Allison (2003). Manakala, ciri –ciri bahasa dikaji berpandukan senarai semak yang dibuat berdasarkan Allsop (1983), Bunton (2005), Huddleston dan Pullum (2005), Swales (1981), Swales (1990) serta Swales dan Feak (2004). Keputusan dari kajian menunjukkan terdapat 35 artikel menamakan seksyen penutup dengan Conclusion (kesimpulan), tiga artikel dengan Discussions (perbincangan), dua artikel dengan Summary (rumusan) dan artikel- artikel yang selebihnya menggunakan pelbagai tema/nama. Terdapat 23 artikel yang mengandungi langkah wajib (obligatory move) bagi menyimpulkan kajian, Summarize the study (M1), penilaian terhadap kajian, Evaluating the study (M2) dan deduksi daripada kajian, Deductions from the research (M3), 18 artikel dengan M1 dan M3, lima artikel dengan M1 dan M2 serta artikel yang selebihnya tidak mengandungi kesemuanya langkah wajib. Terdapat 15 artikel memiliki pola langkah iaitu M1 diikuti dengan penentuan/perolehan implikasi pedagogi, Drawing pedagogical implication, (M1^M3S2). Di samping itu, terdapat 14 artikel yang mempunyai kitaran bagi langkah yang didominasi oleh 8 artikel iaitu pola langkah bagi menyimpulkan kajian, Summarize the study (M1) yang diikuti oleh penentuan/perolehan implikasi pedagogi Drawing pedagogical implication, (M1^M3S2). Dari segi ciri-ciri bahasa pula, terdapat 49 artikel daripada 50 artikel menggunakan kata kerja modus (modal verb) sebagai strategi perlindungan nilai peranti pilihan (hedging device). Malah, kajian ini juga mendapati penulis artikel Malaysia mempunyai pelbagai pilihan untuk ciri-ciri bahasa termasuklah kata-kata kerja bagi merumuskan kajian, menunjukkan kelemahan kajian, memberi rekomen untuk kajian lanjutan dan frasa yang menawarkan beberapa pengertian penting kepada pengajaran. Kajian mendapati sebanyak 40 daripada 50 penulis artikel tidak menepati pola langkah sepertimana yang telah dikemukakan oleh Yang dan Allison (2003).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NNES	Non Native English Speakers
RA	Research Article
GA	Genre analysis
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
CARS	Consolidate a Research Space

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the setting of research problems will be introduced and followed by the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, operational definition of terms, significance of study, and scope of study.

1.1 Background of the research writing

In order to communicate, people use either the spoken or written language. Both have differences, however, they do share a same goal that is for communicative purpose. Regardless of which form of language both of them can transfer the message to other people. For example, people can jot down important things in the written form on the memo or convey the message to someone via the telephone conversation. Speaking and writing have their own advantages. The

speaking is spontaneous while the writing is not spontaneous. In fact, though the writing is not spontaneous yet it is permanent, unless that piece of writing is purposely being burned. Moreover, people can refer back to what they have read on that particular writing, nonetheless, often people cannot refer back to what they had spoke unless their conversation is being recorded.

Clark and Ivanic (1997) stated that there is difference between speaking and writing and it is obvious as “most people acquire the ability to speak in their first language without making any conscious effort, whereas writing has to be learned” (p. 85). On the other hand, people need a lot of times to write. Thus, according to Clark and Ivanic (1997, p. 87), the process of writing requires more time on thinking how and what to write that “often makes people more self-conscious, and this can make the process of writing slow and painful compared with speaking”. To add, they also pointed out that writing is not as simple as the linear model which requires only the “translation of words on the page” (p. 89). In fact, Hayes and Flower (1983) claimed that writing is a non-linear recursive process which involves numerous stages such as the planning, translating, and reviewing (as cited in Clark & Ivanic, 1997).

Even though the writing is time consuming, it is still preferably as a form to spread the information. The writing shows its importance ever since the caveman time as they drew on the cave wall to record important events and the invention of paper from the papyrus. The publication has greatly developed since the invention of paper. Henceforth, more and more writing has been published such as the Bible, newspapers, and books. In addition, Clark and Ivanic (1997) expressed the view that “writing is, ultimately, always maintaining or promoting certain interests” (p. 118) which is “culturally and institutionally marked” (p. 126). According to Webber (2005, p. 171), the writing is generally considered to be both “logical and interactional”. Since the writing has its important for communicative purpose, recently, greater emphasises has been put on the academic writing. Furthermore, due to its prominence in term of storage, the writing is more favourable in the academic world though it is difficult task yet

requires more skills. Likewise, Hoey (1983) believed that the writing is important due to “the prestige of the written language in our culture” (as cited in Webber, 2005, p. 171). Webber (2005) stated that writing which is challenging and complex yet extremely important has attracted many linguists to devote more of their “attention to the study of written articles than oral presentations” (p. 170) as the academic writing “are seen as priorities for students” (p. 171).

Upon the consideration of students’ needs, Swales (1990) has conducted the study of “written genres in the academic settings” (p.46). Based on his study, he invented the Create a Research Space (CARS) model which is applicable to the practical situations especially in the academic settings. According to Yu (1998), research writing is not a pleasant experience to many students due to the “daunting size of the document” as well as its high requirements (p. 369). Undeniably, the academic writing is very “taxing” as it “can be definitely characterised neither by the presence of particular rhetorical and linguistics forms nor even in terms of the conventionalised purposes which the host discourse community associates with the genre” (Bronson, 2001, pp.1-2). Due to the complexity of writing in academic settings, Bizell asserted that the academic writing is the responses that require students’ presentation to conform to specific discourse community so, the academic writing are not solely require the cognitive process (as cited in Swales, 1990). Therefore, the academic writing becomes a great challenge either to the native or non-native English undergraduates, as this particular type of writing required not only the knowledge of content but also the knowledge of produce a piece of writing which conform to the culture’s expectation.

In tertiary schools, the frustration of the students to write the challenging, complex yet demanding academic paper is an alarming issue among the non-native students. Similarly, this problem also occurs as well in the higher level, the professional research writing’s settings. The writers of research article face hardships in composing the article not because of their insufficient knowledge or had the poor command in English. They confront with difficulties of article

writing as a consequence of demands from the cultural practices and the publisher. Martin and Burgess (2004) pointed out that academic writers nowadays need to compete with other writers and face the exigency of publishing their article. Thus, the pressure among the writers increased unceasingly due to the reason that in academic world they need to counterclaims the previous research and made the indication of the present gap (Mirahayuni, 2002; Shehzad, 2008; Swales, 1990). The urge for them to present the newly created research space is due to that in a discourse community, all the members share the common goals and it opens the room for their participation for criticism (Martin & Burgess, 2004). Thus, the research writing is very complex as it must match with the convention which is expected by the culture as well as the publisher.

On the other hand, for the non-native English writers, the research writing is indeed a tough task. Mirahayuni (2002, p. 6) claimed that “English has therefore taken the role as a common medium for communication and information exchange, which brings together researchers from all parts of the world to build up a vast body of knowledge”. She further stated that since “English becoming increasingly dominant as the international language of research and publication, non-native speakers of English, they are inevitably required to meet the standard criteria and conventions attached to the RA writing practices in English” (Mirahayuni, 2002, p. 6). Moreover, according to Kanoksilapatham (2007), it is a challenging and daunting task especially for those non- native English writers to put forward their claims within their respective community. He further explained that the non-native English writers always become frustrated as their writing failed to be published. The failure of publishing their writing perhaps can indicate their disability of acquiring the skills for them to communicate not only within their respective community and even unable to convince those writers of cross disciplines or languages. Thus, the frustration exists as either their reputation or prestige will be influenced. Besides, the acceptance from peer and advancement of their career are greatly distorted due to the rejection from the publisher (Kanoksilapatham, 2007). Moreover, Salager-Meyer (1999) stated that the research article is “a product of standardization, professionalization and linguistics

economy” (p. 295). Likewise, Mirahayuni (2002) also mentioned that the English research article will “reflect the values and beliefs that are held by the particular community of researchers” which influence the “structure of organization, conventions and features of the language being used” (p. 7). Hence, frequently the rejection of research articles by non-native English writers occurred due to the absence of the distinctive features as stated above. In addition, as a result of dissimilar values and beliefs, the non-native English writers cannot be at par with the standard set by the native English writers (Miharayuni, 2002).

As a matter of fact, in Malaysia the non-native English writers also deal with the rejection of their research article due to the unconformity of their writing with the publisher. According to Flowerdew, “there is strong evidence of difficulties non-native speakers have in publishing in international scholarly journals, although this has not been well documented” (as cited in Marahayuni, 2002, p. 7). Ahmad (1997) has observed the issue of frequent omission of Move 2, Establishing the niche in the introduction section of Malay research article. Similarly, the Indonesian writers also often omitted the Move 2 in writing their English RA (Mirahayuni, 2002). In other words, the different cultural practice of writing in Malaysia from the non-native English writers increases the tendency of rejection from the publisher. Recently, numerous genre analysis of RA which has been conducted by the genre-analyst has improved the writing of RA among those non-native English writers. Yet, the Malaysian writers still face the problem of concluding the research article. This is due to the fact that the complexity of conclusion section which is still under-research.

Hence, applied linguists’ findings on the genre analysis of writing serves as the pedagogic tool especially for the English for Academic Purposes and English for Professional Purposes (Bhatia, 1993; Bunton, 2002; Dudley-Evans, 1997; Flowerdew, 2000; Hyland, 2002; Swales, 1990 to name few). According to Bhatia (1997), the students’ writing will be accepted within the particular community as they acquired the ability to recognize the structural organization pattern, examine the obligatory and the optional moves within certain genre, and

to find out the typical or conventional textual features and know the purpose of these characteristics as well as to understand the contextualized institution. The academic and social settings will determine the conventions and linguistic feature of certain genre. Therefore, the knowledge of genre enables the manipulation and exploitation of moves by the students in their writing. Undeniably, according to Zemelman and Daniels (1993) writing is “a product of interaction of the global and the particular” (p. 3) and “the act of writing is an act of thought” (p. 2) which explained the need to teach them especially to the novice writers. Even though, it is “not a skill that can be taught in isolation, but is entire faculty’s instructional responsibilities” (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 107).

Based on the previous studies, non-native English RA has been identified problematic (e.g. Adams-Smith, 1984; Bazerman, 1988; Swales, 1990b; Gosden, 1995). The problem aroused due to the difficulties from the aspect of grammar and citations. Parkhurst (1990) and Fox (1994) claimed that the difficulty of the grammatical items regularly faced by the non-native speakers. Nonetheless, Sionis (1995) stated this problem can be solved by providing some “recipes and tips” on how to improve and communicate effectively in their writing (p. 100).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The writing of RA is absolutely different than writing the master thesis or doctoral dissertation. Even the new writers who write their RA will encounter various difficulties in composing it. Similarly in Malaysia, the RA writers also deal with the rejection of their RA due to the unconformity of their writing with the standardisation of international publication.

Unfamiliarity of the shared belief and values of the native English writer among the Malaysians increase the tendency of their RA been rejected by the international publication. In other words, the Malaysian research writing needs to be analysed in order to find out other factors which increase the issue of rejected research writing. The conclusion section of research article is rarely studied unlike

recently numerous studies on RA for the section of introduction, abstract, discussion, and results which have been mushrooming. There is only one research which analyse the conclusion section which had been conducted by Yang and Allison in 2003. However, these researchers mentioned that they will only analyse the move and steps which occur in it and do not investigate the boundaries between Discussion and Conclusion section. Therefore, their investigation of the move in research article's conclusion section is still not enough to help other research have better understanding of the conclusion section.

In fact, there are many inquiries on the conclusion section. For example, if the Conclusion section exists, the section with the heading of Discussion does not exist and vice versa. Sometimes it can be observed that the research writers also combine both sections with the heading of "Discussion and Conclusion". Besides, some of the RA's concluding section is the Pedagogical Implication and not the Conclusion. These are the difficulties that can cause the novice writers doubt the role of the Conclusion section and in what situation the concluding section will be given the heading of Conclusion instead with other headings. Further studies on the conclusion section should be done. Hence, this under-researched conclusion section inspires the researcher to embark on it. Nevertheless, the researcher will focus on the move and languages features used in the concluding section but not the relationship of discussion and conclusion. The researcher will only study the Malaysian empirical research article which is mainly selected from the field of applied linguistics.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This study aimed to analyse the structure and linguistics features of the concluding section of RAs published in Malaysian applied linguistics journals. the specific objectives of the study were:

- i) To analyse structure of closing section,
- ii) To determine hedging in particular, modal verbs used for closing section,

- iii) To identify the main verbs used to summarize the study,
- iv) To find out the main verbs used to indicate limitations of the study,
- v) To determine the main verbs or phrases used to required further research,
- vi) To determine the phrases used to draw pedagogical implication .

1.4 Operational Definition of Terms

Research article:

RAs are those written by scholars with particular pattern. For the purpose of this study, the Malaysian empirical research articles are selected. Those research articles are particularly from the field of applied linguistics. These RAs were written by the Non-native English Speaking (NNES) writers which were taken online from Ebangi Journal, ELT Teacher Resource Center (ELTREC), GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies, Jurnal Pendidik dan Pendidikan, Malaysian Journal of ELT Research, Malaysian Online Journal of Instructional Technology (MOJIT), and The English Teacher. The 50 RAs which had all the criteria of being written by NNES writers, empirical in nature and from the field of applied linguistics will be selected. After the selection, they will be codified as RA1 until RA50 which enable the researcher to record the structure as well as the language features which can be found in the concluding section into the checklists. Thus, the codification simplifies the researcher's task to refer back to these articles at anytime and decreased the error in recording the data into the checklists.

Concluding section:

This was the section where the writers conclude their study in the RAs. In this present study, it referred to the section which appeared before the references section of the RA. Thus, the concluding section would have various headings other than the heading of Conclusion. Usually there are the 'summary from the whole research, evaluate the study whether the methodologies chose were

appropriate, and indicate the significance or limitations of the study. Besides, conclusion also serves to deduce the research. Thus, recommendations for other researchers who want to continue their study were also included. Moreover, in this section the research writers also will offer some pedagogical insights.

Genre analysis:

The linguistic approach of genre analysis is defined and understood to be the study of linguistic behavior in both academic and professional settings (Bhatia, 1997). In addition to a description of the language used, genre analysis is also an explanation of why language used is differently within specific cultures and demarcating of this specific language into smaller elements called moves. According to Swales (1990), move is a text segment which consists of a package of various linguistics features such as lexicon, syntax, and illocutionary propositions. These linguistic features are responsible for providing the given segment a uniform orientation and also signal the content of within the genre. Thus, a genre is constructed based on the moves as each move will lead to the overall coherent understanding of the text (Swales, 1981). These moves are can be inferred through the context. However, they can mainly examined based on their linguistic clues and move within a text can be considered any portion of that text. Moreover, Henry and Roseberry (2001) claimed that the teaching of those particular moves can arouse students' awareness with the various propositions expected within genres. Besides, it helps them to reduce the mistakes due to the failure to fulfill that genre's expectation.

Move and step in conclusion section

Move 1: Summarizing the study

Move 2: Evaluating the study

Step 1: Indicating significance/ advantage

Step 2: Indicating limitations

Step 3: Evaluating methodology

Move 3: Deduction from the research

Step 1: Recommending further research

Step 2: Drawing pedagogic implication

(adopted from Yang & Allison, 2003, p. 379)

Empirical research:

In empirical research, the data collection from different sources is the evidences used to support the research objectives. The data can be in the form of interview or questionnaires. These responses can be used as the needed data for the study. This is due to the reason that these data are related to personal experiences or the results that gained through experimentation which had been carried out. The research design for this empirical research can be either quantitative or qualitative study. Hence, an empirical research article includes the case study, correlation study, experiment, and survey. This type of research report predominantly deals with the data obtained from the study.

1.5 Significance of study

This paper aimed to reveal the move and step which occurs in Malaysian research article. Since, none research has been done on Malaysian RA, this study can provide the insights to other especially the novice writers how to write the conclusion section of research article. Thus, this present study also can reveal the importance of exposing the nature of Malaysian empirical RAs' concluding section. Significantly, the familiarity with the nature of empirical RAs' concluding section enabled them to communicate their information accurately and appropriately. Therefore, this study may lead to the success for international publication especially for the novice writers as they can get the insight on how to structure their concluding section which is acceptable for the scholars.

Moreover, this study can reveal particular structures which are widely accepted, based on the obligatory moves or steps, the higher occurrences of the

structure either the recycling or the linear structure. Based on this study, the novice writers include the researcher would like to see the pattern of the concluding section which is widely accepted. These findings are vital, in order to achieve efficient communicative purpose in the research writing communities the writing must share the same goals and allow participation from other members. Besides, results regarding to the move analysis and language feature, the preferences of the move can provide clearer picture to the novice writer or other Malaysian writers. They can identify the distinctive features of the concluding section. In order to gain wider research community's recognition, the writers must master the discourse aspects in writing the RA.

This study also highlights the language features which have been used in concluding section of Malaysian empirical RAs. The language features such as the main verbs used to hedging, to summarise the study, to indicate limitations of the study, to recommend further research, and the phrases used to draw pedagogical implication can suggest to the student writers whether they need to be more concern on these features. In addition, the findings of language features in this study can offer more alternatives for the novice writers to be used in their writing. In other words, this study can reveal the phenomenon of hedging in Malaysian RAs and varieties linguistics choices were used in the RA writing.

Moreover, this present study may benefit the editors and journal writers as they may need to expand on their writing skills according to the need in Malaysian discourse community. The exposed nature of Malaysian RA's concluding section can assist them to produce a writing which can achieve the communicative purpose. The effective communication is largely depends not only on the convention or structure of the RA, it also include the language features used in it. Furthermore, the knowledge of Malaysian RA can encourage them to be more sensitive to the expectation of reader.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study will only analyse the concluding section of Malaysian RAs. In this study, the empirical RA particularly from the applied linguistics discipline will be analysed. Thus, the RA other than the applied linguistics will not be analysed which include the aquaculture, business management, computer science, and engineering. Furthermore, it did not analysed the RA from other languages or countries. Only the concluding section will be analysed. Other sections for instance, the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, and abstract will be omitted in this study. The researcher will only focus on the move structure and language features used in the concluding section.

In this chapter, the background of the research problem is introduced, the purpose of the study, the research objectives, the statement of the problem, operational terms and the significant of the study are described. In addition, the limitations of the study have also been discussed. Next, the review on the related literature as well as the previous studies which has been conducted will be discussed in detail.